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Haitian orphans held as pawns in political stalemate

Jeff Hoogendoorn

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — On any given day hundreds of children fill the orphanages of the Western hemisphere's poorest and extremely volatile nation, Haiti. But a recent stand-off between the Haitian Embassy in Ottawa and Canada's National Adoption Desk (NAD) does nothing to ease the over-crowded conditions to which these children are often subjected.

The disagreement effectively halts all future adoptions of Haitian children from the Rainbow of Love, an orphanage in Port-au-Prince which represents the bulk of Canadian adoptions.

NAD's mandate is to serve the provinces as a federal agency. It forwards adoption packages to proper authorities and attempts to begin a working arrangement with countries where there is an interest to adopt.

NAD's role now is to get to the heart of the matter regarding

the suspension of adoptions. Janice Durston, international adoption consultant with NAD, claims that "dispute" is not really the correct term, yet she offers no other explanation.

Questions about reasons

What NAD has done so far is to write to the Haitian Embassy in Ottawa to invite a discussion about ending the suspension. There has been no response yet from Haiti's camp. According to Gail Barth, adoption co-ordinator for the Canadian Foundation for the Children of Haiti (CFCH), this leaves many Canadian families with pictures of their children on the fridge but no idea if or when the suspension will be lifted.

What truly is at the core of the halted procedures? A call by CC to the Ministry of Children and Families went unanswered. Durston of NAD's Ottawa office gave no explanation, saying only that a letter was drafted and

presented to the Haitian Embassy to deal with whatever grievance there is.

A representative at the Haitian Embassy in Ottawa remarked that this is "not necessarily a disagreement" but did concede that the embassy is "not receiving files from NAD." She vaguely noted that the decision to halt adoptions came from the government of Haiti in order to "study the Haitian adoption process."

Haiti's preference

Barth believes that the problem may stem from Rainbow of Love and CFCH being virtually the sole agents for adoptions of Haitian children. However, she notes that CFCH does not have a monopoly, adding that it had never before been an issue.

Barth thinks that the suspension may be a response to an un-enforced Haitian precept which states that those intending to

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Michelle, a housemother at the orphanage, holds Kathleen, who has been adopted by Jeff and Pat Hoogendoorn of Victoria, B.C.

Conservative ecumenical college to draw from the classics



Augustine College's working group meets at Nate's Restaurant. From left, Graeme Hunter, Greg Bloomquist, Larry Eshelman, Wayne Nimigan, David Jeffrey.

Alan Doerksen

OTTAWA — A one-year Christian college will open its doors in the nation's capital this coming school year. Augustine College, the brainchild of a group of Ottawa-area Christians, expects to enrol 18 students for a foundational program that will bring the rich heritage of Christianity into focus.

The college will be distinct from other Christian colleges which offer university education partly because it enrolls students for only one year and partly because of its distinct curriculum.

"We really felt there was a need for it here," explains Dr. Wayne Nimigan, the college's president, who is a physician with the Orleans Urgent Care

Clinic in Ottawa. He's not just referring to the fact that, except for the Catholic St. Paul University, there are no other Christian institutes of higher learning in the city. He is especially thinking of the one-year foundational program which will run from September to next April, and which will include Latin, science, medicine, Bible, philosophical and literary ideas, art and music, and mathematics.

Nimigan himself will teach a course in "Science, Medicine and Faith" this fall.

Most courses will be morning classes and will be held at the Church of the Ascension, (Anglican) in Ottawa. Several other churches have offered to let the college use their buildings.

Although no churches have offered direct financial support, the college has received "modest

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News

Dispute halts future adoptions of Haitian children



COURTESY JEFF MOOGOON
Children like Ezra pictured here stay in an orphanage in Haiti even though the Toews are eager to bring him to Canada.

... continued from page 1
adopt must not have their own family. As it now stands, the bulk of the children adopted are going to established family units. It would appear that Haiti is attempting to stem this tide.

Barth agrees diplomatic channels and rules must be observed to ensure that "there is no baby-buying and all those other ugly things that happen." However, she doesn't agree with the current suspension. "I don't think stopping anything is in the best interest of the children."

Gladys Sylvestre, director of Rainbow of Love, is also mystified about the dispute. She has been away from Haiti recently so she, too, has no answers.

However, she has "talked to a lawyer in Haiti" to try to get some answers. Her biggest concern right now is to make sure people realize the program is still open and she says "I'm angry that social workers are telling people the program is closed when it's not. To me, this is a fact-finding mission" of the Haitian Embassy.

Terrible conditions

Inadequate medical care, high unemployment and insufficient amounts of food daily face this nation of some 6.5 million people. This is precisely why many Canadians are willing to take Haitian children into their own homes. Stacey and Laurie Toews

of Victoria, B.C., are one of 13 Canadian families awaiting their child's arrival — an arrival time which is now in limbo.

Laurie says she is "not surprised this is happening because of the recent election in Haiti." She and husband, Stacey, are awaiting the arrival of Ezra, an 18-month-old boy who was abandoned on the doorstep of Rainbow of Love. Laurie is confident that the directive will not affect her son's homecoming. Noting the optimism of Gladys Sylvestre; she says, "Gladys lives there and deals with these people all the time, so we trust her."

The Toews also have the "advantage of knowing we're going

to Haiti ... to be with our son," says Laurie. They plan to travel to Haiti in October and stay for as long as it takes to bring Ezra home, even if that takes months.

Their church, the Chinese Cultural Alliance Church, is very supportive of their decision. However, Laurie notes that to some members the adoption process is foreign. They look upon it almost as a sponsorship program and not the enveloping of a new family member. The Toews' greatest source of support is people they work with and others who are in the adoption process.

In the meantime, the waiting continues for the children of Haiti.

New college follows Augustinian tradition

... continued from page 1

donations from interested people" and seed money from its own working group, says Nimigan. St. Paul University is offering Augustine students the use of its library, for a \$100 fee per student.

During this year, the college's administration will decide whether or not to expand the program, says Dr. Greg Bloomquist, who assists Nimigan at the college.

Bloomquist is currently on sabbatical from St. Paul University, where he teaches New Testament and Greek. He is also an Anglican priest, although he has had some involvement with the Christian Reformed Church and is on the board of Ottawa's Redeemer Christian High School.

So far, Augustine College has not done much publicity except through limited advertising and mailings. Bloomquist says, "We've wanted to catch on by word of mouth and people's referrals." He sees the college's program as providing "a foundational platform" for students, giving them a clear under-

standing of the Bible, church history, art and science. Such a program will fill a gap in high school and university education. "We're aware of the demise of secular education," he says. "Often times, Christian education in the secondary school has not been up to standard."

Augustine's influence

A press release from the college elaborates on this by stating: "For some years, it has been evident that the Canadian university system has fallen short of its historic mission, both in academic and spiritual terms.... It has seemed to us that what is most needed at this present time is the opportunity for dedicated students to study, for one year, the basic foundations of Western intellectual and cultural tradition. We also recognize that this can only happen in an atmosphere of sincere and articulate Christian commitment, such as has sustained both faith and human culture since the days of the early church."

The college takes its name from St. Augustine of Hippo.

During the process of setting up the college, the planning group "had a lot of discussion about what the college should be called," says Nimigan. The name Augustine was chosen because "that Augustinian tradition of faith seeking understanding is something we wanted to embody." Augustine was "one of the great sinners who became a great saint."

Bloomquist asserts, "St. Augustine is one of the most pivotal characters in Western history." His work just before the Dark Ages "provided a light" through that period.

Planning sessions

Nimigan, Bloomquist and others have worked for years to bring the dream of the college to reality.

Nimigan cites Dr. David Jeffrey, a just-retired English professor from the University of Ottawa, as someone who "carried the torch for this" for a long time. Over the past few years, Nimigan and Jeffrey have met with other academics in the Ottawa area, often over breakfast, to discuss starting the new college.

"One year to 18 months ago, discussions started in earnest," explains Nimigan. At meetings last November, the working group decided to start the college's program this fall if at least seven students signed up. Nimigan observes that Vancouver's Regent College initially had only five students.

By February of this year, nine applications had come in, so the working group pressed ahead.

By September, Nimigan expects 18 students will be registered for the college's first one-year program.

One advantage of the college's small size will be a good professor-to-student ratio, says Nimigan. Compared to university classrooms with 100 or more students, this is "a much preferable kind of education experience," he asserts.

Community life will be another important aspect of Augustine College. Nimigan and others have found apartments for some of the male students and a house that will be rented for use as a female students' residence. One evening a week, students and faculty will meet together for a communal meal as well.

Recently, the college got charitable status from the government, and plans are now under way to make connections with other universities and colleges so that graduates of Augustine College will be able to get credit for their courses and continue their education elsewhere. Nimigan adds that the college is considering introducing a one-year post-graduate program in the future.

Dedicated moonlighters

Unlike many Christian colleges, all of the 15 faculty members connected with Augustine College either teach or work elsewhere as well. Faculty members represent different denominations, including Anglican, Catholic, United and Baptist, notes Bloomquist. The main point faculty have in common is

agreement with the Apostles' Creed.

David Jeffrey took early retirement this year from the University of Ottawa to help start up the new college. This year, he will teach a course in art and music. Jeffrey says graduates of Augustine College will be able to move into a variety of fields such as medicine, law or engineering. Classic subjects such as Latin will be taught because "until after Calvin's death, the main theological language was Latin."

No serious disagreements

Although the instructors come from a wide variety of denominations, Jeffrey says there have been no serious theological disagreements among them, and he doesn't expect any. Despite any differences, the faculty are all "on the orthodox side of our faith traditions" and are "theologically conservative. There are none of us who can't subscribe to the Apostles' Creed."

One thing which has united the founding members of the college has been its long-established prayer and Bible study group, explains Jeffrey. This has helped them bond together as a community. Jeffrey describes himself as an "evangelical Anglican" who was previously involved in the Christian Reformed Church.

Jeffrey says there's one other common point among the faculty: "All of us are longstanding members of the secular university community."



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News

Evangelical Fellowship defends parents' right to discipline children

Alan Doerksen

WINNIPEG — The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) is considering possible legal action to protect the right of parents to discipline their children.

"The issue here is not child abuse," explains EFC president Gary Walsh. "Every responsible Canadian opposes child abuse in every form. The issue here is the intrusion of the state into the domain of parental responsibility."

Walsh made the comments in response to an announcement by the Canadian Foundation for Children, Youth and the Law, a Toronto-based advocacy group, that it has been granted funds from the federal Court Challenges Program to begin work on a Charter of Rights and Freedoms challenge aimed at repealing Section 43 of the Criminal Code.

Section 43 provides a defence to a charge of assault for parents who use reasonable force to correct a child. Walsh says that to criminalize physical discipline will only serve to undermine

those parents who use it in a reasonable, conscientious way.

"By criminalizing physical disciplining of children, society would be saying that parents cannot be trusted to raise their children," says Walsh. "That's not the message we should be sending parents today. What we should be saying to them is that they must take their rights and responsibilities seriously."

Expects failure

Jim Read, chair of EFC's social action commission, says that the granting of funds to the Canadian Foundation "seems almost tendentious." But he adds, "In general terms, I think it's a good thing for government to have money available for people to bring challenges to the law." The Court Challenges Program is "pretty arm's-length from government itself."

Read believes a court challenge from the Canadian Foundation would not succeed. "If they do bring a challenge to the point, we could respond," he says. EFC could apply to be an



Jim Read

intervenor in a court case — something it has done before in "high-profile and potentially landmark court cases," says Read.

Last November, EFC issued a paper which spelled out its views on the physical discipline of children by parents. One key point EFC makes is: "While it is true that some parents resort to physical discipline too quickly and too often, it would be preferable, and more effective,

for the state to launch an education campaign about alternative approaches to discipline.... Education and assistance are a much better way than criminal charges to deal with parents who use physical discipline inappropriately."

Public education on this issue is something EFC is considering as well. Read says this will be on the agenda of the next EFC meeting.

Provision necessary

Read approves of Section 43 the way it is. "We don't see that there is sufficient reason for changing it," he says. "By and large, there's a good job being done by Christian parents.... Without this provision, there

would be a greater opportunity for police or neighbors to interfere in the appropriate nurture and discipline of children."

If Section 43 were removed, he speculates, "any case of an unconsented-to touching would be a violation of the law."

Read emphasizes that EFC's position is not a "pro-spanking" position. "Disciplining of children is not only spanking," he notes. "The abuse of children is not only physical abuse."

Another alternative EFC recommends is for the government to revise Section 43 by including an explicit definition of what is "reasonable force" for parents to use when disciplining their children.

Five children die in Filipino orphanage fire

Two awaited adoption by overseas Christian families

Bruce Sonnenberg

IRVINE, Calif. — A 4 a.m. fire which blazed through the Rainbow Orphanage in Dumangete City on the island of Negros in the central Philippines on Sun., Aug. 10, killed five young orphaned children. The facility, which was new, housed 24 orphans. The fire quickly spread throughout the two-storey wooden structure built on a cement foundation and located on one acre of land.

American missionaries Trip and Susan Kimball — Susan founded the orphanage in 1989 — were awakened by the noise of the fire.

"It appears that a fan motor sparked and the flames spread quickly," explained Pastor Bruce Sonnenberg, senior pastor of the Village Church of Irvine, Calif., whose church and its board of elders provide the legal covering for the orphanage in the United States. "Trip started getting children out while Susan went upstairs to get their teenage daughter, Leanna. The fire spread so quickly that Susan and Leanna were trapped until the Lord opened a way for them to

run downstairs.

The couple, along with others on their staff, were able to rescue 19 children, but five young children did not make it. Paul, Gershwin, Gumer, Willmer, and his brother, Jesan, have gone to be with the Lord. And although that is a much better place than here on earth, we will sadly miss them."

Sonnenberg went on to say, "Two of those who died were in the adoption process with their new families from overseas and were scheduled to [leave] in the next few weeks. So these families are mourning too."

Trip Kimball, who is also a pastor, has second degree burns on his back and legs, while Susan was burned on her hands and lost her voice from smoke inhalation. Leanna also suffered from smoke inhalation.

Everything gone

Besides the tragic loss of these young lives, "the building and everything in it is a total loss," said Sonnenberg. "From baby beds, to the new washer and dryer, to the tooth brushes and Bibles — everything is gone. They have received some baby clothes from local Christians and are carrying for the children along with another American missionary, Lori Cle-

ments, while they stay in temporary accommodation."

Pastor Sonnenberg said that already \$21,000 (US) has been donated by churches and individuals in the United States. He stated that the building is insured, so the funds will be used to help replace all of the other items that were lost in the fire.

"Susan started the Rainbow Orphanage in 1989 as a result of seeing so many people there, especially children, with no means of care," said Sonnenberg. "They generally have about 25 children, mostly babies, under their care. They are all true orphans, unwanted children, and deserted children as well. The orphanage works with adoption agencies around the world through the government of the Philippines to find parents for the children. They always look for Christians applying to adopt these young children."

Pastor Sonnenberg added, "Trip and Susan Kimball are totally dedicated to serving and caring for the 'lost' children of Dumangete City. Although heart-breaking, this tragedy will not deter them, but all the more challenge them to keep on the frontlines with the memories of those who died, and the love of Jesus Christ."

'Spanking' study by Calvin prof cited in New York Times

Phil de Haan

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — A study by Calvin College developmental psychology professor Marjorie Lindner Gunnoe which analyzes possible relationships between spanking and aggressive child behavior was cited in an August 20 article in the *New York Times*, the U.S.' foremost daily newspaper which is distributed across the nation and the world.

The Times noted that Gunnoe's study "challenges the notion of the simplistic relationship between spanking and aggression."

Gunnoe completed her study while she worked for an organization called Child Trends, Inc. For five years she followed a group of 1,110 children from four to 11 years old.

She found that the only statistically significant association between spanking and increased aggression, as measured by the number of fights at school, occurred among boys eight to 11 years old who lived with single mothers who are white. She also found that spanking by black mothers of their four- to seven-year-olds lessened the children's aggressive behavior. That was true regardless of gender and family situation.

Young kids accept parents' right to spank

The Times story, which also looked at another spanking study, said: "One of the studies, led by Dr. Marjorie Lindner Gunnoe, a developmental psychologist at Calvin College, affiliated with the Christian Reformed Church, in Grand Rapids, Mich., found that certain groups seemed to benefit from spanking. Spanking appeared to make the children of black mothers — only the race of the mothers was surveyed — and all children from four to seven less aggressive over a five-year period, meaning that they reported getting into fewer fights in school."

The story continued: "[Gunnoe's] theory is that children under eight tend to regard spanking as a parent's rightful exercise of authority, while older children are more likely to see it as aggressive because they are less willing to accept parental authority. In addition, Dr. Gunnoe proposes that black children are more inclined than white children to think spanking is acceptable because it is favored in the black community." Dr. Gunnoe was quoted as saying, "In therapy, some black mothers say, 'Timeouts are for white people.'"

Editorials

New law strikes at the root of no-fault divorce

Louisiana, Minnesota, Michigan and several other American states have done something about the dismal divorce situation which is pretty much the same throughout the U.S., where half of the marriages end up in divorce. They have introduced an alternative to the no-fault divorce system that allows marriages to be dissolved at the drop of a flirtatious eyelash. Now, couples can decide to opt for a "covenant marriage" (see CC, August 8).

If they agree to enter such an arrangement, couples must undergo counselling before marriage and be instructed about the nature and obligations of their union. They have to agree to get additional counselling if marital difficulties arise. And in Louisiana, the wait for a divorce, should one or both spouses want that, would be extended from 180 days to two years.

Immediate divorce would still be available to someone whose spouse committed adultery, domestic violence, child abuse or a felony. In other words, no one with a covenant marriage will be forced to stay with a dangerous spouse.

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4-261 Martindale Rd./ St. Catharines, ON, L2W 1A1

Tel: (905) 682-8311;

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We heartily applaud such innovative legislation.

Clever law

It may not sound innovative to those of us who have always considered marriage a covenant, but in today's climate of individual human rights it's not easy to come up with a law that on the one hand does not force people into arrangements they do not want, and on the other hand offers an attractive alternative with a bit of a twist.

The twist is that any couple has to face the reality of whether their intended union is meant to be a lasting one. Most couples would like to think that the other person intends to be faithful "till death do them part." Imagine the following situation painted by Louisiana State Representative Tony Perkins: the man wants a no-fault marriage and the woman wants a covenant marriage. The woman is offended. "What? You mean you don't want to be faithful to me for life?" This couple has some sorting out to do.

Couples whose marriage came in under the no-fault system are allowed to change their legal status to a covenant marriage.

From destructive to constructive trend

What this legislation trend shows is that there is a backlash from the trend of instant marriage meltdown. In her book *The Abolition of Marriage* journalist Maggi Gallagher writes that because of no-fault divorce laws power has shifted from the spouse who wants to stay married to the spouse who wants to leave. "Today," she writes, "while it still takes two to marry, it takes only one to divorce."

Part of the backlash to this destructive trend has come as a result of studies which show that children especially suffer when their parents' marriage breaks up. Even adult children have a hard time coping with the reality of divorced parents. The bills for the sexual and social revolution are coming in, and there's hell to pay.

A Christian marriage

In the midst of all this turmoil, the Christian norms for marriage shine as a bright beacon of hope. As we read a form for marriage that appeared in Dutch in 1566 and that has been revised and translated for churches of the Reformation in North America, we need only quote the words of the prayer offered by the officiating minister to catch a glimpse of the beauty and sensibility of a marriage in Christ.

For the sake of contrast, imagine this prayer were printed on the front page of your city's main newspaper next to a story about

infidelity or teenage pregnancy:

"Most merciful and gracious God, from whom the whole family of earth is named, we pray that you will confirm with your blessing the marriage into which our brother and sister have entered this day. Grant them your Holy Spirit to help them be true to the vow and covenant [emphasis ours] they have made. Guide them in the way of righteousness and peace so that, loving and serving you with one mind and heart all the days of their life, they may be abundantly enriched with the tokens of your everlasting favor in Christ Jesus our Lord.... Grant them wisdom to build a home which will glorify your name and promote the coming of your kingdom. May they live together many years, and in the hour of death may they part in the blessed hope of celebrating forever with all the saints of God the marriage of Christ and the church he loved."

Magnificent words like these lift marriage above the humdrum of secular life, where infatuation, power, greed and self-will eat away at the foundations of life, and where "no-fault" living creates the illusion of freedom and happiness.

That illusion is re-enforced by the elaborate trappings of weddings. Isn't it remarkable that at a time when weddings are at their most extravagant, the prospect of a good marriage is at its lowest? Perhaps the states should pass another law asking covenant couples to set the spending limit for weddings at \$5,000. It helps to have a ring presented as a symbol of "constant faithfulness and abiding love" rather than as a symbol of status.

BW

Christ's no-fault love

On October 14, 1956, Lutheran bishop Lajos Ordass preached his first sermon after having been released from a communist prison in Hungary. His text was based on the parable of the royal wedding feast (Matth. 22). He said the following:

"When two people want to get married, they often say to each other: 'You are my one and all! I love you until death, forever.' I have heard the same words in my life with my Lord and Savior. He said to me, his unworthy servant: 'You are my one and all.' I know that he said that to me in the moment when I wanted to give up. He said it as if I were the only human being on earth. I have heard it from him: 'I love you until death, eternally!' When there was no human hand I could hold, he firmly held mine. To him the cross, to me his peace. To him death, to me his fruit: life" (*He Could Not Do Otherwise*, Laszlo G. Terray, Eerdmans, 1997).

Opinion

The growing irrelevance of the CRC synod

William D. Buursma, Harold Dekker,

Tyman E. Hofman

Christian Courier and *The Banner* have put out their usual fine reports of what happened at the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, with pictures, creating an image of substance and success while presenting no substantive evaluation of the synod as such. Although the criticism of a couple of delegates and an advisor came to light, the reports would lead us to conclude that all went well at synod.

Most of the delegates were deeply impressed with the Synod of 1997 and their role in it. Some of those same delegates gave the impression that the one-week synod was the greatest invention since the introduction of sliced bread. We overheard one say, "We will never go back." In this context we believe it is good for us to write a "minority report" which will essentially say that the synod of the CRC is growing in size and "glitz" — and in irrelevance.

Synod becoming increasingly irrelevant? you ask. Yes indeed! Irrelevant in the sense of having decreasing impact on the life of the churches and of the ministries of the CRC, and failing at the real task of what a synod is supposed to be and do. That is a bold indictment which we will try to explain and demonstrate.

Loss of loyalty

There are two major factors in the decline of synodical relevance, one of which is very difficult to do much about. That is the waning of denominational awareness and loyalty, with an increasing "congregationalist" mentality that has concern only for the congregation of one's membership.

What synods say and do is of little concern to such members (and often to their ministers and elders). Next month they may leave the CRC to join some splinter group, or some megachurch which doesn't even have "church membership" for the throng that comes to its services.

The pulpits of the CRC ought to face up to the challenge of rejoicing in being part of a vital and vibrant Reformation church, not hiding who we really are under the bushel basket of "the community church."

The need to deliberate

The second factor is more disturbing because, we fear, we are creating it ourselves and will likely do nothing to change it. We could remedy it if we had a seasoned view of what synod ought to be and ought to do.

To get to the heart of the matter we would posit that a synod is supposed to be a deliberative assembly. It might be shocking to find out how few people today have good insight into what that is, so we will try to set that forth.

A deliberative assembly is one in

which those who are delegated by the "churches" face the business of the church and deliberate or discuss each issue, drawing out all of the implications of a proposed decision so as to come to a mature and responsible mind.

Deliberation requires time for thought and prayer, and for discussion on and off the floor of synod, for the formation of "the mind of synod." That discussion should be such as to inform and bring unity to delegates who may have come to synod with inadequate or conflicting insights.

That deliberation is particularly essential in the advisory committees of synod, often requiring several days working on complex issues.

Fewer delegates, more time

For a synod to be deliberative it should not be large. When everyone has an opinion and a fervent desire to express it and the synod has 180 delegates, it is nigh impossible to have a deliberative assembly. In such a case it is very difficult for a good debate to develop, a debate that speaks to the arguments pro and con, with appropriate rebuttal and counter-argument. The smaller the group deliberating, the more deliberative the proceedings.

Those who remember the '50s when there were 20 classes and 80 delegates meeting for two weeks will immediately know what we're saying. We would dare to claim that a synod should not be larger than 100 delegates if it is to maintain its deliberative character.

Further, for a synod to be deliberative it must have ample time for that process to develop and mature. Given the reality of 180 delegates plus many advisors, all with the "privilege of the floor," and the constraint of a one-week synod, one can see the immediate threat to a deliberative kind of synod. This conclusion is not just theory or speculation on our part. Some specifics tell the story very clearly.

One lump

Rev. Duane Kelderman was reporting to Synod 1997 for the worship committee on a lengthy and important document setting forth the essence of Reformed worship for our times. The committee had about 10 resolutions and synod was discussing and voting on each separately when a delegate proposed taking all of the propositions together and voting on them. Synod agreed and then, to the amazement of many, decided to vote without further discussion.

This led Kelderman to protest that the central recommendation of the report had not been discussed and whereas he was happy that synod was looking favorably on the report, he considered it "irresponsible" not to discuss the central issue before voting.

A second instance was in the adoption of the church's mission-and-vision statement. It was reported that three delegates

brought specific criticism of the document and strategies which, if true, should have called for some re-examination.

It also reported that Gaylen Byker, the president of Calvin College, was dismayed that the statement had nothing in it concerning Christian education. In spite of having been shown this glaring omission, synod immediately approved the statement and its goals and strategies.

No minorities

The heart of our concern was expressed by George Vander Velde, a veteran synodical delegate who reflected afterwards on the absence of minority reports. In only one of about a dozen committees was there a difference of position that led to a split report.

Vander Velde's insight and evaluation of the situation is, to our mind, well conceived. He pointed to the time restraints of a one-day meeting for advisory committees, seriously limiting their deliberative process and making the formation of minority reports almost impossible. He also pointed out that the ultimate cost in lost opportunity for deliberation should be considered rather than to make the speed with which synod completes its business the measure of its success.

A rubber-stamp synod

What is the end result when synod loses its deliberative character? Quite clearly, synod will become, more and more, the rubber stamp of the agencies it has entrusted to do its work.

The role of synod will become, more and more, that of the typical American church convention, at which cut-and-dried matters are placed before hundreds of delegates who come to celebrate and

participate in the pep rallies that promote the programs of the church.

Such conventions can deal with the business of churches many times the size of the CRC without advisory committees, where only hot-button issues ever raise any discussion and are not seriously deliberated. Any slippage in the direction of the convention mentality will work to make our synod increasingly irrelevant. We are beginning to see that develop.

Forum for leadership

What should we do? First, reduce the size of synod to two delegates from each classis for a total of about 90 delegates (or devise some system of proportional representation depending on the size of each classis). This would also greatly reduce synod's cost. Second, with that savings in hand, allow the possibility that synod can go into its traditional 10-day meeting, or more if necessary.

Finally, synod should dedicate itself to reflecting its true nature as the broadest court of the church, the forum for deciding matters of creed and confession and church order, and for appeal in settling matters that could not be handled by the other judicaries of the churches. In addition, guarding against all encroachment of political correctness, synod ought to clearly set forth and review the mandates under which its agencies are to work, and commit itself to seeing to it that the agencies are living up to those mandates.

William D. Buursma, Harold Dekker and Tyman E. Hofman are retired Christian Reformed pastors who meet regularly for discussion and fellowship in a group called the Seneca Club in Grand Rapids, Mich.

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Education

Calvin stroke clinic returns to campus

Phil de Haan

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Last spring, as part of its expanding communication disorders program, Calvin College opened a stroke rehabilitation clinic on its campus, bringing together its students and local residents who had suffered strokes. The combination proved to be a winner.

Calvin students gained hands-on experience in a field — speech pathology — which they plan to enter professionally after graduation. And eight local residents gained access to high-quality rehabilitation at a low cost. This September the Stroke Rehabilitation Clinic will return to campus.

Soliciting patients

Clinical supervisor Jill Bates, who has a master's degree in communication disorders, says four clients already have committed to the three-month program, but openings remain for 10 more. She will take referrals from hospitals, social workers, family members or even from the client.

"We're looking for people who have had either a stroke or an aneurysm and could benefit from continued treatment," she says. "There needs to be some potential for improvement."

Careful preparation

The clinic will begin on September 23 and run through December 9, meeting on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons at Calvin. Prior to the first session Calvin students have two weeks of class during which they prepare for the clinic, including study of their clients' medical records and the preparation of a detailed plan for an initial evaluation. Then, during the first session, students and clients have a two-hour evaluation during which they determine the goals for the semester. The focus of the clinic, Bates says, is on "functional communication."

"The students," Bates says, "do a very good job. They're very compassionate and very sincere. They are service oriented; the model we use is one of empowerment. And it's very dynamic therapy, using

state-of-the-art, current methods."

Calvin has a variety of equipment at its disposal, including a VISIPITCH machine which gives a visual picture of speech patterns. "One of our former students donated the machine," Bates says. "It's a pretty unusual piece of equipment for western Michigan."

Cost for the therapy is minimal — just \$10 per session with all the money pumped back into the clinic. That cost can be waived, Bates says, for those for whom it would be a financial hardship.

Calvin College 'stone cold sober'

**Marian Van Til, with files
from Phil de Haan**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Every year *The Princeton Review* releases a quirky (and some would say humorous) guide to the best U.S. colleges/universities. The guide is based on surveys of students at hundreds of academic institutions.

When this year's guide was released on August 20, Calvin College made it onto eight lists (a couple of them a dubious honor). If there's one list that the general public might think characterizes a college named "Calvin," it would be the one called "Stone Cold Sober" — indicating that drug and alcohol use is negligible and studying time is high.

Discussions rare?

The "Stone Cold Sober" list, says the guide, "is based on a combination of survey questions concerning the use of alcohol and drugs, hours of study each day and the popularity of the Greek system." Calvin forbids drug and alcohol use and has no fraternity or sorority system. Students spend an average of 3.54 hours a day studying.

The other lists naming Calvin College were: "School Runs Like Butter"; "Students Pray on a Regular Basis"; "Town-Gown Relations are Good" "Class Discussions Rare"; "Scotch and Soda, Hold the Scotch"; "Don't Inhale"; "Future Rotarians and Daughters of the American Revolution" (both politically conservative groups).

Pedagogeries



Alyce Oosterhuis

Post-holiday blues

It is that time of year when teachers are drifting back to their classrooms and prepare themselves for another period of teaching and learning. After weeks of vacation with rest, recreation, friends, social gatherings, travel, camping, and no obligations, the prospect of another year of work may bring on post-holiday depression and lethargy. As teachers stare glassy-eyed at their empty bulletin boards and bulging file folders, their thoughts dwell on the joys of unstructured days, late night celebrations and family/friendship reunions. I have no doubt that as these teachers chafe at impending deadlines, compulsory inservices, and boring staff meetings, their calculators are in gear to apprise them of how many RRSPs are required before they can file for early retirement. Undoubtedly, many principals and board members are presently reconsidering the value and benefit of extended vacations for these lethargic teachers.

If there is anything that ought to minimize the experience of post-holiday blues, it should be an encounter with someone whose employment has just been terminated and who has no obligations beyond finding an alternative to his/her previous work situation. What if ones 4-6 week vacation time was extended involuntarily for 4-6 months or years? What if one had to retire, regardless of whether one was 60 or 65? What if one was no longer essential to the school; its children, staff, parents, curriculum, administration? Would the memory of the last weeks of freedom continue to glow and attract for the future?

Defined by occupation

I suspect that such an encounter and reflection would minimize the impact of post-holiday blues and lethargy. For most teachers the wish to "make a difference" in a child's life has compelled them for many years to study, plan, work overtime, go the extra mile, tolerate hardships, struggle with burn-out, volunteer for committees and assignments. Remove the opportunity to teach and the teacher finds him/herself with a void for self-definition and meaning. In our society, where we make small and big talk on the basis of what we do rather than what we are, introducing oneself as an "ex-teacher," often brings on a discussion of ones past experiences and present void.

As the world of work shrinks, the variety of experience and social interaction begins to shrivel. To counteract such shrinkage and fill the void, it is not unusual to find early retirees travelling extensively. But when they return to their home communities, few of their previous colleague friends want to hear about these travel experiences because they are too immersed in meetings, lesson plans, curriculum development, making a difference in children's lives.

If commitment and involvement are the very staff of life, then post-holiday blues cannot linger indefinitely. Eventually such blues must fade as we realize that although we might chafe at our obligations, they define, involve, stimulate, and keep us vibrant.

I have always thought of early retirement as a desirable possibility — I think I have just talked myself out of it.

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis is looking forward to another year of teaching and service at The King's University College in Edmonton, Alta.



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Music Review

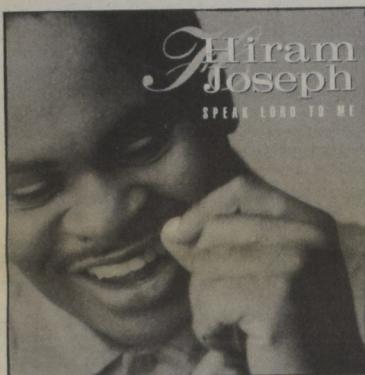
Black CCM artist hesitates to explore gospel tradition**Hiram Joseph: Speak, Lord, to Me**

Covenant Music Group, North York, Ont. 2774 50011 2 (CD). Produced by Tim Schwindt.

Hiram Joseph, 32, is a Christian and a black Canadian. This compact disc contains 12 songs which overtly call listeners to praise and to rely on Jesus; Joseph wrote eight of the 12 songs himself.

Joseph has a good voice and a talent for penning rhyming lyrics. In putting this album together he also obviously had the help of some expert friends: other singers, a kids' choir, instrumentalists (sax, horns, guitars, bass), percussion, piano, organ, other keyboard and programming.

But this recording, his second, suffers from the same fault that plagues many Christian contemporary music (CCM) recordings, especially of singers who haven't been around very long: it's overproduced and sounds too slick, too "manufactured"—a kind of muzack with Christian lyrics.



The few lyrics which hint at adversity in the Christian life do so set to music which sounds like what you might hear in a softly lit restaurant over a romantic dinner. Even after listening to the CD three or four times, few of the songs are particularly memorable because they sound like each other, and like so many other people's songs.

All the ballad-like songs blend into one another in terms of style, melodic movement, harmonies and even instrumentation. The same is true of the more upbeat numbers, with the possible exception of the opener, "Praise the Lord," a paraphrase of Psalm 150 which has a more memorable tune and a catchy, insistent beat.

No cutting edge

In Joseph's case all of this is particularly unfortunate because he could have made much better and authentic use of the black gospel tradition, and he has experience as a jazz vocalist. A couple of songs allude to that tradition, but only in a muted way which has the effect of sounding sanitized rather than authentic. There's no cutting edge expression of faith here.

Joseph may have been advised not to exploit that tradition because doing so would push him out of the mainstream of white CCM fans who buy most Christian pop recordings. While that might indeed have resulted, the reasoning is unfortunate. An infusion of the black gospel tradition would have helped make this CD sound more real, and would have helped create an album more challenging to, and longer-lasting for, the listener.

Joseph has appeared on 100 Huntley Street and sang at the Promise Keepers Hamilton, Ont., convention earlier this summer. He undoubtedly has the talent to be much more inventive than this recording shows him to be. It is to be hoped that in the future he'll dare to musically explore his faith in a more original manner. Having said all that, the fact remains that a lot of people who like what might be called easy-listening CCM will enjoy this recording.

Book Review

A surprising portrait of Christ

Harry Der Nederlanden

The Gospel according to the Son

by Norman Mailer.

New York: Random House, 1997. ISBN 0-679-45783-6. 242 pp., \$31 (Cdn.), \$22 (U.S.).

To write this novel demanded tremendous chutzpah, if not outright presumption. But Norman Mailer, a writer of enormous talent, has no lack of either. He has never been accused of underrating himself (an early collection of essays was titled *Advertisements for Myself*).

Mailer is not only a novelist, he has written on political events, the moon race, boxing, Marilyn Monroe, and idiosyncratic essays of a philosophical nature. To many he may even be better known as an outspoken TV personality who has uttered extreme and biting critiques of everything from the political right to the feminist left. He then appears profane, egotistical, caustic, flamboyant, irascible, extreme, intolerant, and always irredeemably irreverent.

Misgivings

Knowing this, I opened *The Gospel according to the Son* with deep misgivings. It is, as the title suggests, a rewriting of the gospel in the first person (I). From beginning to end Mailer writes as Jesus, describing the events on his life and his own inner thoughts.

Just this, I suspect, is enough to turn off most orthodox believers. I admit I don't have much stomach for such revisionary lives of Christ, whether in print or film. Most are undertaken either to expound a gospel very different from Scripture and/or to shock our pious sensibilities. Mailer might be expected to do both, on a large scale. Several of his novels have been hugely ambitious, stretching the scope and endurance of even the most committed reader.

Surprising restraint

The Gospel according to the Son is, however, a model of decorum and restraint. It is true that Mailer omits many things found in the gospels, inserts inner reflections and feelings, and adds to Jesus' words. This was to be expected; otherwise he would merely reproduce a harmony of the gospels.

For the most part, however, Mailer stays very close to New

Testament data. In fact, much of the dialogue is taken from Scripture almost word for word. Quite a large proportion of Jesus' inner reflections derive from the Old Testament. When Jesus recounts his 40-day fast in the desert at the beginning of his ministry, for example, he recalls: "The prophets were

This is, however, not to suggest that the portrait of Jesus that emerges is orthodox. One will find something to quarrel within nearly every one of the novel's 49 chapters. In his account of the feeding of the 5,000, for example, Mailer's Jesus criticizes Mark for exaggerating, because he fed only

500 and he accomplished this not by multiplying the loaves and fishes but by satisfying each person's hunger with a tiny morsel. The miracle is allowed to stand, but it becomes a miracle of spirit rather than matter.

Afterward we get a typical bit of Mailer metaphysics:

"Exaggeration is the language of the Devil, and no man is free of Satan, not even the Son of God (and certainly not Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John). So I knew that many of my followers would increase the numbers of this feat. Yet I also suspected that my Father

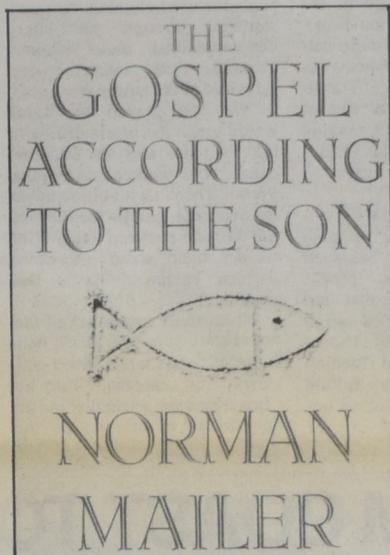
preferred each miracle to equal no more than the need that called it forth. Even as waste will exist in all matters, so in the working of miracles, extravagance is best avoided."

Yet in the very next paragraph we get an account of the miracle in which Jesus walks on water. Mailer's Jesus admits that such a miracle is hardly modest.

Rethinking your own portrait

Reading this novel will make you rethink your own portrait of Jesus. It forces you to examine how much of it is truly derived from Scripture. Because you are forced to wrestle with trite, sacrosanct images, reading this novel will probably be more enriching than many, if not most, orthodox depictions, simply because the latter are so predictable. Teachers in high school, and study groups, may do well to use this book to spur reflection on the Jesus of Scripture.

Harry Der Nederlanden has done doctoral work in literary theory used in Renaissance literature. He lives in St. Catharines, Ont.



Church

Conflict creates opportunity among unreached Philippine people group

COTABATO, Philippines (EP) — Several weeks of intense fighting on the southern island of Mindanao in the Philippines created an opportunity for Christian workers to share the gospel with an isolated group that has had practically no access to the Christian gospel.

In late June the Philippine army attacked Camp Rajamuda, the second largest base of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, one of three rebel groups battling for Muslim autonomy in the southern Philippines. The attack killed 25 and sent tens of thousands of villagers running from the marsh that has been a stronghold for the rebel group.

Long-time isolation

According to the Baptist Press, those villagers belonged to the Maguindanao people group, a Muslim tribe that fled to the area four centuries ago to escape Spanish conquistadors and has lived in virtual isolation since. Among the one million Maguindanao — the largest unreached people group in the

Philippines — there are no churches, and very few believers.

Many of the Maguindanao who fled the marsh took refuge near Cotabato, which is home to many evangelical churches and a centre of Southern Baptist mission work. Evangelical missionaries assessed needs in the refugee camps and broadcast appeals for used clothing, rice and sardines through an interdenominational radio station. Christian relief workers were surprised at the strong response.

"We had prayed the Lord would touch the hearts of Christian Filipinos and the Maguindanao," one worker told Baptist Press. "There's a lot of prejudice between the groups because of the history between them. But we've seen some of those barriers broken down in this situation."

While most non-Muslims do not venture into the marsh because of bands who kidnap outsiders for ransom, Filipino Christians were excited about an opportunity to minister to the

Maguindanao in the evacuation camp. As a result, good relationships have been formed with many of the Maguindanao people. "These people's lives have been devastated, and there are tremendous needs in community development and health care education that we could meet," said the relief worker. "There's been a long cease-fire now and it looks like the crisis is beginning to pass. Now we're praying about what to do next."

Care and prayer

When the Maguindanao can return home, they will take with them Scripture portions in their own language, the memory of having seen the "Jesus" film in their own language, and the knowledge that Filipino Christians cared enough about them to bring aid.

"Pray that we would know what to do next," the worker said. "Pray that God will speak to these people as they read the Scriptures. And pray that more workers would come forward to help in this effort."

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Osoyoos - CJOR.....	8:00am 1490
Penticton - CKOR.....	8:00am 800
Port Alberni - CJAV.....	7:00pm 1240
Prince George - CJRX	7:00am 94.3
Princeton - CHOR.....	8:00am 1400
Smithers - CFBV.....	9:15am 1230
Summerland - CHOR....	8:00am 1450
Vernon - CJIB	9:30pm 940

QUEBEC

Montreal - CIAC	7:30am 600
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ALBERTA

Brooks - CIBO.....	8:00am 1340
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Ft. McMurray - CJOK ...	8:30am 1230
High River - CHRB.....	6:30pm 1280
Edmonton - CKER	11:00pm 101.9

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Estevan - CJSL.....	8:00am 1280
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Chatham - CFCC	6:30am 630
Fort Frances - CFOB	9:30am 640

Guelph - CJOY	8:30am 1460
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Kapuskasing - CKAP	9:00am 580
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Kingston - WLKC	7:30am 100.7
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Newmarket - CKDX	9:30am 88.5
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Oshawa - CKDO	8:00am 1350
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Owen Sound - CFOS	10:30am 560
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St. Catharines - CKTB	7:30pm 610
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Samia - CHOK	7:30am 1070
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Windsor - CKLW	8:30am 580
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Wingham - CKNX	10:30am 920
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Woodstock - CKDK (fm)	8:00am 102.3
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NEW BRUNSWICK	
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Saint John - CHSJ	9:30am 700
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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND	
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Charlottetown - CFYC	7:00am 630
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Middleton - CKAD	8:30am 1350
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South African Reformed church struggles with unity models

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — The Reformed Churches in South Africa (GKSA) are debating a unity model that would join the black and white churches but would preserve some form of church government to handle matters belonging to a particular language and cultural group.

The GKSA is the name of the mainly white synod, with some mixed-race congregations. It forms a general synod with two other national synods, both black, but most serious matters have been handled at the national synod level.

At its January synod meeting, the synod approved a plan to have all the black and white congregations come together in regional classes, regional synods and in national synods. Thus, geography and not race would be determinative. In addition, all congregations would have an open membership without respect to race or language group.

The GKSA also considers there are some concerns, such as Bible translations, that are peculiar to those who share a common language and culture. The synod has proposed that congregations also may form classes and synods on that basis to deal with such matters.

This model will be brought to the two other national (black) synods, Midlands and Soutpansberg for discussion.

Blended worship the answer

HOUSTON, Tex. (EP) — Churches caught between the conflicting needs of "boomers" and "busties" are finding a solution in blended worship, according to the Rev. Robert Webber, a leading authority on worship renewal. Speaking to the biennial convocation of the Fellowship of United Methodists in Music and Worship Arts in mid-July, Webber said the concept of blended worship provides hope for bringing together contemporary and traditional worship styles.

He described the tension in recent years between those who resisted singing modern praise choruses and a new generation of "seekers" who think "mainliners are not even Christian." Now, he observed, there is growing awareness that both are needed and that "blended" worship is not only possible but desirable. Webber is the author of more than a dozen books about worship, including *Worship Old and New* (Zondervan).

Online game first in Christian music industry

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (EP) — The first online game in the Christian music industry is drawing tens of thousands of Internet users to the www.ForeFrontRecords.com web site. The

game is based on the "Buzz" character who appears in promotions for ForeFrontRecords. In the game, "Buzz" flies around an alien planet avoiding dangers while collecting transmitter parts that will let him spread the gospel.

"Transmitting To The World" is just like an arcade game," says Mark Adkison of ForeFrontRecords. "We've already seen our web site traffic increase up to 30,000 hits in one day, and it's a good feeling to know that some kids who've never heard the Bible's message will get their first taste of it with this game."

For our
Calendar of
Events,
please turn to
page 19

Church

Clinton issues guidelines on religion in federal workplace

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — U.S. President Bill Clinton issued new guidelines on the place of religion in the workplace, and directed all federal agencies to protect religious expression and exercise by the country's two million civil employees.

Drafted principally by the American Jewish Congress and the Christian Legal Society's Center for Law and Justice, the new "Guidelines on Religious Exercise and Religious Expression in the Federal Workplace" were endorsed by ideologically diverse religious and civil rights organizations.

The guidelines clarify that federal employers "shall permit personal religious expression by federal employees to the greatest extent possible." Subject to concerns for workplace efficiency and the rights of other workers, the guidelines affirm a number of legal rights held by federal employees, including the right:

- * to read Scriptures during breaks;
- * to share religious beliefs with receptive fellow employees;

Survey finds Bible readers are often happy and at peace

WHEATON, Ill. (EP) — Looking for happiness? Look no further than your Bible. A new survey commissioned by Tyndale House Publishers found that nearly 90 per cent of frequent Bible readers say they feel at peace all or most of the time, compared to 58 per cent of people who read the Bible less than once a month.

Mark Taylor, president of Tyndale House, said that regular Bible reading helps people "find a higher degree of meaning and happiness."

Other survey findings:

- * 81 per cent of frequent Bible readers said they feel content most of the time or all of the time, and 69 per cent reported being extremely satisfied with their lives. By comparison, among people who rarely or never read the Bible 67 per cent reported that they regularly felt content, and 57 per cent described themselves as extremely satisfied with life.

* Among regular Bible

readers, only 15 per cent indicated that they worry about being accepted, compared to 28 per cent of infrequent Bible readers. Some 22 per cent of non-readers said they worry "somewhat" or "very much" about death, compared to only 12 per cent of regular Bible readers.

* Nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) of those who read the Bible more than once a week said they feel joy all or most of the time, a figure that is nearly twice that of those who read the Bible less than monthly (35 per cent).

* A clear purpose and meaning in life was reported by 92 per cent of frequent Bible readers, compared to 69 per cent of infrequent Bible readers.

The survey was conducted for Tyndale by the Illinois-based Market Facts Inc., which mailed surveys to 1,000 adults selected at random. The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus five percentage points.

The flap about the NIVI

"Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us" (Acts 1:21, NIV).

"Therefore it is necessary to choose one of those who have been with us..." (Acts 1:21, NIVI, [New International Version, Inclusive Language Edition]).

This verse illustrates one of the reasons why many people have protested against the Inclusive Language Edition of the NIV (the NIVI) which was recently published in Britain. The protest has been so strong that the International Bible Society has decided to withdraw this edition of the NIV from publication and to abandon all plans for future "gender-inclusive" revisions of this popular Bible translation.

This decision by the IBS has been widely reported in the press and has caused a good deal of controversy. As is common in such cases, the controversy is complicated by divergent accounts of what actually happened, charges of unethical behavior, disagreements about what constitutes current English today, and widespread ignorance of the way gender functions in the biblical languages.

Unfortunately, the whole issue has become an ideological battle, and the arguments pro and con have become weapons pro or con either women's rights or biblical authority. As a result, ill-considered arguments can be found on both sides of the debate, adding extra fuel to the controversy.

Inclusive language and accuracy

In my opinion, there are many cases where the NIVI can be considered more accurate than the NIV. This is especially true if we concede the point that the word "man" should no longer be used in a generic sense in contemporary English (admittedly, this is probably as much a political as a linguistic point, but it has become a widely accepted editorial policy). However, in many other cases the policy of "inclusivizing" has led the NIVI to adopt translations which are less accurate than the original NIV, and thus justify some of the criticisms which



Chapter & Verse

Wayne Brouwer
Andrew Kuyvenhoven
Laura Smit
* Al Wolters

have been leveled against the NIV Inclusive Language Edition. The translation of Acts 1:21 is a case in point.

Most people are aware that the Greek language makes a distinction between *anthropos*, "man" in the sense of human being, and *aner*, "man" in the sense of adult male. It is the same distinction which we find in German and Dutch between *Mensch/mens* and *Mann/man*.

If we adopt the policy that the English word "man" should only be used in the second, gender-specific sense, then *anthropos* should normally be rendered as something like "human being" or "person," and *aner* by "man." Consequently, it can be argued that the many places in the NIV where "man" translates *anthropos* should be changed to a word which is unambiguously generic.

However, in the case of Acts 1:21, there is no such justification for changing the "men" of the NIV, since the Greek original here has the plural of *aner*. The Greek says pretty plainly that the apostle who was to replace Judas was to be chosen from among the *men* (adult males) who had surrounded Jesus during his earthly ministry. To change "the men who" to "those who" is to introduce an inaccuracy into the translation. Since there is no linguistic reason for this change, one is led to suspect an ideological one.

It is striking that the New Revised Standard Version, which has also adopted a generally "gender-inclusive" policy, does have an accurate rendering of our verse, translating the relevant phrase as "the men who." In this case, ideology did not override linguistic accuracy.

Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont. He is one of the translators of the New Living Translation, which has generally adopted a mildly "inclusivizing" policy.

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Summer story

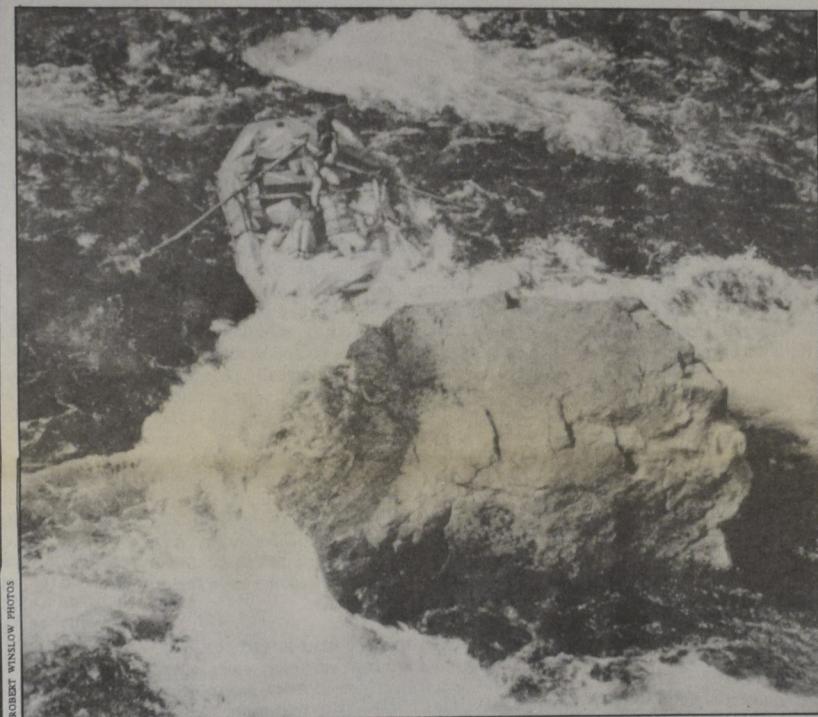
Noah's twelfth day

Jen VanderBeek

Cool, lightless water covered the face of the earth. Wind whipped white tipped waves, smashing them against the solid cedar sides of the great vessel. The sky hung heavy and thick with the rain that pounded down onto the surface of this widening sea. The sun hid high above dense, dark clouds.

Deep in the belly of the ship, he stirred from his bench. The warmth of the small cooking fire glimmered in the cheeks of his family gathered at the table. His wife, subdued yet stoically cheerful for the sake of the younger folk, ladled out the soup into earthen bowls. His sons and their brides laughed and joked, eyes sparkling, as they accepted the nurturing broth from her hand. He recoiled at their innocence. Or was it stupidity? How could they not know?

His wife's gaze lingered on his and he turned from the room. A gust of wind screamed through the roof vents as the polished planks under his feet creaked in time to his even, solid step. He had to check. He needed to make sure things were okay in all the pens, boxes, perches and bunks. Sleepy eyes winked at him out of the dark as he passed with his oil lamp. An earthy, hot smell enveloped him and he knew that tomor-



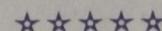
row he would have his sons clean this deck first. His light caught the shy shifting of the varied animal faces as he walked down the aisle.

Rain pummeled the roof. Though pitch kept the moisture from seeping into the ark, Noah felt the rain's cold detachment and it frightened him. Steady and ceaseless and unending the rain washed the entire earth outside the ark. For eleven days and nights the drumming rain had continued, always falling, always loud, drowning out the rolling thunder and dulling the swoosh of the waves beating against the

sides of the boat, lulling the animals into this hypnotized, unnatural state. No sound but rain.

Noah climbed the hewn rungs to the little window he had built near the top of the ark. Yesterday only the very tips of the tallest trees on the low mountains were showing. Today they lay submerged deep beneath his feet. He hoped this new horizon that the wind had carried them to last night would reveal some portion of land. Something to mark, something to break the continuous line of water all around. Something bigger than this meager flotsam of wood.

Noah shaded his brow and peered through the curtain of droplets. The midday sky loomed dim and heavy. Nature's night had put on a wet mask of rain obliterating the day. And the days before. "How many days yet to come?" he thought.



Noah saw only water. He strained his eyes in all directions. No trees, no mountain tops. Large floating objects bobbed in pretense, betraying his hopes. On every side Noah saw just waves and black water. He rested his

forehead against the window ledge and tilted his face to the God who seemed so far removed now from this damp darkness.

During the time when Noah built the ark, plank next to plank, day after day, for one hundred and twenty years, God had walked with him. Noah had seen the corrupt ways of the people. He could hear the evil inclinations that seeped from their mouths and hearts. Diligently Noah worked, his head bowed over the wood, and God stayed near speaking to him the instructions and the measurements.

God had said everything on earth would perish. Had to perish. Putting an end to all people was the only way to get rid of the violence that covered the earth. Noah thought he had heard. He thought then that he had understood.



And then Noah heard the cry.

"No, dear God, no! I can't take another one!" he roiled. His hands over his ears, Noah concentrated on the splashing drops that formed rivulets before him. How could there still be one with the strength to call? It had been two days since the last ones. Would it never stop?

Moments later Noah opened his eyes and stood still.

"Please!"

He heard the pitiful cry with the soul of his being.

"Please."

Noah bent his head to

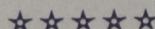
look into the water four decks below. In the darkness he made out the shape of a small raft, as long and as wide as a grown man. Not a fishing boat this time. The maker of this raft had used a good design. It must have been afloat for seven or eight days. That it still floated testified to the skill of its carpenter, surely a man like himself who knew the mastery of wood. A torn canopy flapped over the back of the little craft.

"Please."

The plaintive cry was directed at the Ark. The raft bounced and bobbed on the waves. Noah pushed the window open wide before him. He peered through the sheeted rain to see the shimmer of the raft's wet floor. A man stood at its centre. Noah saw by the line of his beard that this pagan was an elite aristocrat from a neighboring town. The man's brown cloak draped his bent frame. Near the man's feet lay a lifeless mound of blue cloth. Standing in the circle of the man's core was a small

Noah hid in the shadow of the small hole.

"Oh Lord. Not another child!" Noah groaned. He felt the tears begin their outward journey from his soul.



The shivering man balancing on the raft could not see through the mist to where Noah stood secure behind the Ark's window.

"Hello." Noah called at last in a low voice. "Over here. Behind you."

The man turned his head, searching the top of the great vessel for the outline of this voice, his sure redemption.

"Sir, please." The words were neither strong, nor loud, nor demanding. Rather a plea choked forth from the worn throat of the man.

"Not for me." The man picked up his boy and held him up to Noah. The boy did not squirm as he felt himself hoisted over his father's head.

"Please, take my son."

Noah looked in silence and the salty water ran into

The little boy hung in the air at the ends of his father's arms.

"He is all that is left. He must be saved." The man's voice broke and the little

"He will be your son." The man's voice broke. "Can you deny your own son?" he whimpered.

Noah spoke under his breath to the God who



boy turned to look.

Noah looked again at the heap of cloth on the corner of the raft. More than a heap. He wondered when she had died. And why. At dusk she had to be buried as was the custom. And the law. This law this man would keep? Noah felt his heart surge within him.

"I cannot take any passengers. It is Almighty God's decree." Noah's voice, propelled by his anger, pierced the air.

"I will give him to you," the man cried loudly, and his arms shook so fiercely that he had to lower the boy to the safety of his legs. The child clung to the damp cloak of his father, burying his face deep in its folds.

"I cannot take any aboard." Noah looked away from the man. The heavens cried down on them all.

the father cover his eyes with his hands. He did not look at the small boy climbing the rope, hand over hand. He did not hear the pelting rain as it beat on his head and hands. He heard only the rush of the blood as it pushed in and out of his heart.

Noah felt the tug on the rope at the moment he heard the father's scream and saw the splash below. The child had disappeared into the cold, deep waters. The little hands could not hold the wet, slippery rope. The knot tied round him had not held.

"No-o-o-o." Noah heard the cry and knew it must have come from his lips as the man had already disappeared into the depths of the water in search of his child.

Noah ignored the shudder that urged him to find the warmth of his family. He did not hear the frantic splashing in the water below.

He stood a long time feeling heaven's tears wash over his own. He could feel the wind blowing the ark further and further from the little raft. At last Noah could see nothing of the man or the boy or the wooden raft. He saw only the water all around.

He heard only the rain thundering the echo of God's words: "I am grieved that I have made them."

Noah pulled the window shut and moved his foot to begin the long climb down the ladder. Back again into the bowels of the ark.

Jen VanderBeek is a freelance story writer who lives in Forest, Ont., with her husband and five children.

**Noah looked in silence and the salty water ran into the corner of his mouth.
His head shook from side to side.
Such huge eyes on this small child.**

boy with huge eyes. He hovered for shelter between his father's sopping sandals. The hand of the man shielded the child's head from the rain.

"Please." Again the man on the raft called in a despairing tone towards the sealed door of the ark.

the corner of his mouth. His head shook from side to side. Such huge eyes on this small child.

Noah called into the darkness in a voice that cracked: "I cannot take passengers. God has forbidden it." The words rained down on the man.

Feature

Choices

Dedicated to my unborn child

Barbara Mucia

At 5 a.m. my state of sound sleep was abruptly interrupted by the shrill cry of my alarm clock. It was mid-October, the leaves had gone through their annual metamorphosis and now they lay on the cold surface of the earth, dry and brittle. I could hear them crackle as the wind rustled through the air.

The faintness of light reflected from the street lamps as I glanced through the window. There was no evidence of morning approaching. She was still hidden behind the darkness of night, awaiting to emerge, to begin another page in the Book of Life.

I was far from elated over the news of my pregnancy. Shocked was more in line with how I felt.

The sensation of impending vomiting was quite evident this morning as it had been every day, all day, for the past four weeks. It was beyond my comprehension how anyone could possibly say, let alone believe, that pregnancy is a joyful experience. I was miserable. Every bone in my body ached. I had a wretched taste in my mouth that persisted no matter what I did to alleviate it, and the nausea and vomiting continued from sunrise to sunset.

No other way

I was far from elated over the news of my pregnancy. Shocked was more in line with how I felt. For years I had been told by doctors that due to a congenital illness, conception without a fertility drug was near impossible for me. How could I possibly raise a child as a single parent uncertain the child's father would be supportive. It was financially impossible and emotionally frightening. The only sensible alternative in my opinion and the opinion of friends and family was to terminate the pregnancy.

My decision was final. Abortion was the only viable solution. In just a few hours, it would all be over with. I could then close the book on this chapter of my life. What harm could there really be in having an abortion? I thought. I was a

mere eight weeks along in my pregnancy, carrying only a mass of living cells. I was sparing two lives unnecessary pain. In my mind, I had begun to justify my decision. The doubt I felt was repressed by fear.

I picked Lisa up promptly at 7 a.m. We stopped for coffee and walked into the clinic at a quarter to eight. I was relieved to have her by my side. I was scared and needed moral support. I filled out some medical questionnaires and shortly after eight they called me to the lab for a urine specimen and a blood test. Then I paid the cashier my \$225 and waited to be called on by a counsellor.

No comfort

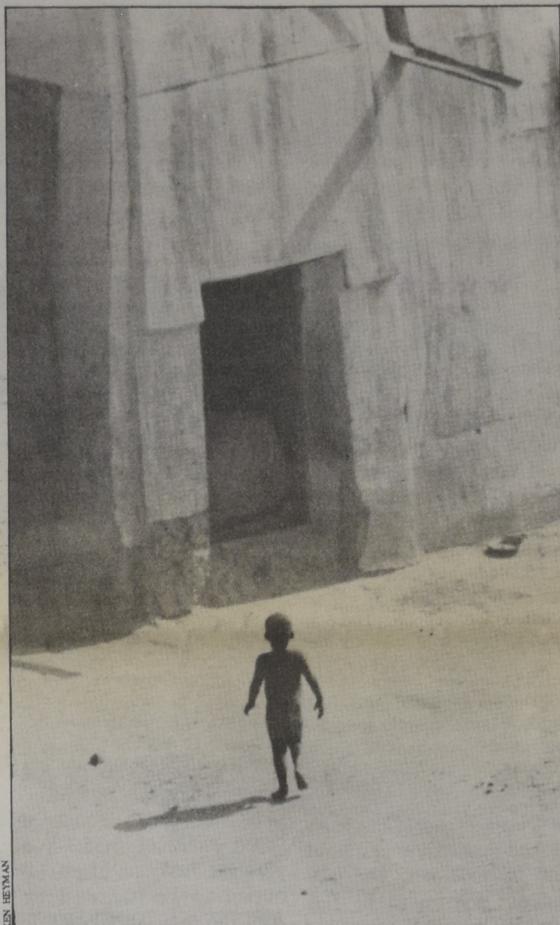
I don't recall the name of the counsellor, but she was a heavy-set woman. I would estimate in her mid-30s with a smile that just wouldn't quit. I presume her never-ending smile was an attempt to make me feel more comfortable; nonetheless, her presence was most discomforting.

I got very little procedural information other than it was to be a suction abortion, some post-abortion instructions, and questioning as to whether my decision was a firm one. I did not have to convince her that I felt I was doing the right thing. She led me to the dressing room where shortly thereafter I was summoned by a nurse to the operating room. My legs were propped in stirrups and my body positioned properly for the doctor to perform the abortion.

As he began the procedure, the nurse held my hand explaining the doctor's every move. Cervical anaesthesia was administered. I felt some tugging and then the suction began. I couldn't bear to look at the device used, but I could hear it. The sound was much like that of a vacuum cleaner. I felt cold and the bright light above me was blinding.

The tugging continued and I began to feel cramping. The more severe the cramps were, the tighter the nurse held my hand. Her timing was excellent, she seemed to know exactly when the cramping would begin and end. It seemed like an eternity, but the entire procedure took but a few minutes.

Before the doctor retired from the room, he paused for a



"I no longer believe that we have the right to make choices that effect the destiny of another human being's life."

moment to tell me all went well. I didn't want to cry, not there. I took a deep breath in order to hold back the tears. I kept thinking, "God, what have I done?" I sat up and as I glanced across the room, I saw a jar of bloody fetuses, a sight I am unable to remove from my memory.

Feeling empty

I was then led to a recovery room. I was still cold. The recovery room nurse brought me a blanket. I laid there feeling a sense of emptiness I have never known.

There were approximately 15 women in the room with me. No one said a word. They all looked about my age, late twenties, early thirties. A room full of pale, blank faces. I doubt the

best of comedians could have changed our expressionless glances.

We all sat recuperating together for the next hour, all as anxious as the next to get out of that morbid place and leave the memory of our experience within the four walls surrounding us. Possibly I am being a bit presumptuous as to how these women felt, but the looks in their eyes was what I was feeling in my heart.

The lie emerges

I followed the post-abortion instructions for the next week. I was relieved it was over and physically I felt 100 per cent better. All was well, until feelings of doubt that I had repressed so well began to

surface. Had I taken it upon myself to play God, to tamper with nature?

During my pregnancy, I had an instinctive feeling I was carrying a girl; I even named her. What I believed to be a mass of cells living within my body now became a vivid image in my mind of a beautiful baby girl named Samantha. The chatter in my mind became louder and clearer. I became more and more anxious, until I could no longer hide behind the lie that my abortion was justified.

A woman's choice?

I am a former advocate of NARAL, the National Abortion Rights League. I have always felt that a woman should have a choice in these matters. I still believe that we as individuals should have the right of choice in matters that effect our lives. However, I no longer believe that we have the right to make choices that effect the destiny of another human being's life.

Samantha was not just a mass of cells. At five weeks, she was already growing arms. By her tenth week, she would have been able to open her mouth. Samantha had no choice. I took that away from her. I am filled with guilt and regret. I have prayed for forgiveness and asked God to relieve my pain, for I am grieving.

I could only envision the burden a child would bring to my life prior to the abortion. I did not consider the joy that we could have brought to one another's lives. I have always believed that money has a way of corrupting some lives. And so it does, for monetary reasons were a major factor in making my decision to abort my child.

How does one forgive oneself for a decision so irreversible? Today, I mourn the death of my unborn child, I mourn the death of unborn children aborted every day, and I mourn for myself and the many other women exploited by abortion.

Abortion is not a way of life; it is death — a reality we have the choice to accept or reject in our society. God has given us a choice. It is from my heart that I ask we all unite and make the right choice, the choice for life.

Barbara Mucia lives in Des Plaines, Illinois.

Feature

Saying goodbye before you say hello: coping with a miscarriage

Lynn Klammer

When I heard that I was having a miscarriage I was stunned. I had started bleeding four days earlier, but while my head told me it was over, my heart couldn't let go until that day in the doctor's office.

I felt a flood of emotions that day, and the days that followed were filled with questions. Had we lost a child or merely a "pregnancy"? If life begins at conception, then where was the funeral for our lost child? Why were there no cards of sympathy, or so few words of remorse from friends and family? My questions included concerns about God's role in our tragedy. Why did this happen to us? What was God's purpose in allowing this to happen?

The experience of God's quiet miracle brings with it a legacy of intellectual and emotional effects. The womb is not just the vehicle for bringing humans into the world. It is the birthplace of tomorrow. It is the impetus for hopes, dreams and expectations. When a child dies, so do these hopes and dreams for the future.

Unlike women who experience the death of an older child, women who have a miscarriage often have their feelings minimized or discounted. After all, how can you feel the loss of a child that you never saw or held in your arms?

'What's the big deal?'

Perhaps the worst thing about having a miscarriage (next to the actual loss) is that people do not understand — especially when the miscarriage occurs early in the pregnancy. Dr. Audrey Stryker, a gynecologist/obstetrician practising in Saginaw, Mich., states that "at least one million of the six million pregnancies in the U.S. each year are lost in the first semester."

Linda, a mother of three, had a miscarriage during her fourth pregnancy. She remembers, "My family and friends did not seem to understand. I felt like their attitude was that I was only six weeks pregnant, so what was the big deal! It was through learning about miscarriage and discovering that my feelings were 'normal' that I was able to deal with it."

Linda also notes her feelings about the church during this difficult time: "I felt cut off from my church. I'm sure that if I had shared my grief with my church

I would have been met with warmth and understanding. However, I had never heard of any special prayers or services for an infant lost prior to birth, so I felt like there was no consideration given to these children. It made me feel like this child didn't matter."

Sr. Lisa Cogliandro, a Christian service outreach worker for the Catholic Diocese of Saginaw, responds to Linda's concerns by saying, "The Catholic Church does recognize the profound loss suffered by parents and families whenever a child has died.

"The loss felt can be even greater when the death is of a child not yet born, and the church makes a special effort to minister to families experiencing this grief. There are specific funeral rites for children who have died before baptism. These rites invite the entire Christian community to minister to the bereaved through offering consolation and support. There is also a beautiful 'Order for the Blessing of Parents After a Miscarriage.'

"The prayer which closes this blessing is a deeply sensitive one: 'Lord, God of all creation, we bless and thank you for your tender care. Receive this life you created in love, and comfort your faithful people in their time of loss with the assurance of your unfailing mercy.'"

Sr. Lisa feels that "children represent what is most innocent, most natural and most unconditionally loving in the human person. In a real way, then, we see children as being very close to God. Jesus even tells his followers, 'Let the children come to me. Do not hinder them. The Kingdom of God belongs to such as these' (Matt. 19:14)."

Working through your loss

The most common reaction following a miscarriage is, of course, depression. It takes time to grieve the loss of a child, and we all grieve in slightly different ways. However, there are times when professional help may be needed. Vickie Gravila-Retich, a clinical psychologist, cautions, "Seek help if the feelings of sadness, depression, anger or any other emotions continue for so long or are so extreme as to interfere with daily activities.... Another warning sign is forgetfulness — it

often indicates a preoccupation with the miscarriage, the past, and an inability to move forward. Avoidance could also be a warning sign... not seeing any expected feelings."

Common reactions to a miscarriage, such as grief and depression, are easy to understand; but when a woman experiences guilt and a sense of failure she may feel like she's not "normal." However, these responses often follow the news that a miscarriage has occurred.

child, or to make a donation to a ministry or charity in the child's memory. For myself, writing this article brings closure to my own grief. It's a way for me to feel that the loss of my child was not in vain, but rather will provide education, comfort and support to others.

It may be comforting to know that having had a miscarriage does not necessarily preclude the possibility of having future children. In fact, Dr. Stryker states that "80 to 90 per cent of

months of a recent pregnancy — allow your body to heal and become more nutritionally sound; refrain from the use of alcohol/tobacco or any unnecessary drugs (including prescription and over-the-counter medications). In short, change the things you can change. Solicit advice from your physician in this regard. Don't get pregnant again until you are physically and emotionally prepared."

Be there and listen

If you yourself have not personally experienced a miscarriage and are wondering what you can do or say to help someone who has, you should know that the answer is very simple — be there and listen. A woman who has just lost her child may be searching for answers, but comments like "perhaps it's for the best" or "that's just nature's way" minimize her grief, as if making excuses for her pain rather than directly addressing the reason for it.

The words "I'm so sorry" can be the most understanding and comforting words you could say after a miscarriage. As much as you may want to reassure her, you cannot. You can only be there to listen and say "I'm sorry."

When I learned that I was having a miscarriage I had a period of five days of bleeding before I felt it was over. I used that time to adjust to my loss. The last night before my bleeding stopped I spoke to my child. I told him I would always love him, would never forget him, and that he would always be my little angel. It was the only way I could say goodbye.

I'll never know if my child was a boy or a girl, a blond or a brunette. I'll never see her eyes light up when I walk into the room, or feel his warm embrace as I put him to bed. He will never be a visual image in my mind, but he will always be a living memory in my heart.

Every woman must deal with her loss in her own way, and in her own time. As for me, I will always carry my unborn child in my heart. In my mind I know that I have two living children, but in my heart there will always be three.



"Children represent what is most innocent, most natural and most unconditionally loving in the human person."

For many women, dealing with their grief consists of more than working through their emotions. It also includes memorializing the life that has been lost. Organizing a scrapbook, compiling a notebook of thoughts and feelings, and writing a poem or letter to the lost child are common ways to bring closure to the experience.

Another life-affirming act is to plant a tree in memory of the women who experience a single

miscarriage will have a successful pregnancy outcome with their next pregnancy. This number is higher if women have previously delivered one or more healthy babies and is slightly lower if the women are greater than 35 years of age at conception. To optimize your chances of a successful pregnancy: see your doctor preconceptionally for an examination; begin prenatal vitamins preconceptionally; don't conceive within three

Advice/News

The letter barrel is dry

Dear Readers:

With the publication of today's column our file is empty. We've had a good run since the last time we had to solicit your mail. Now it's up to you. So write us, won't you?

* * *

Dear P & M:

I appreciated your column about "Doing Good on Sundays" (June 13, 1997). As you pointed out, Sunday should be a day for worship and enjoying the beauty of nature. I also agree with your observation that the custom of inviting people over after church has declined.

When I grew up no businesses were open on Sunday, not even a gas station or restaurant. More people went to church; they used the Sunday to visit the sick or shut-ins. Now I see many church members who see nothing wrong with crossing the street to buy groceries right after the morning service. Or they'll go home to do their washing, vacuuming or baking. When you say something about it to them they say, "Well, we went to church." No wonder that the younger generation is

turned off by the church. One young person even asked me, "How come people do this. Aren't they breaking one of the Ten Commandments?"

Dear Sunday Observance:

Not wanting to be legalistic, we may have drifted into a secularized version of freedom which is slyly robbing us of God's good gifts. Don't be surprised if the next century sees the pendulum swing back the other way as we re-claim the almost lost gifts of rest, worship and Christian fellowship.

* * *

Dear P & M:

Just an update on the situation I wrote to you about last February ("Dealing with Accusations and Fragile Egos" Feb. 14, 1997). My best friend's son wrote me two more hateful letters accusing me of saying something sarcastic about him to his mother. He also threatened to break up the longstanding friendship between his mother and me if I did not respond by a certain deadline. When his mother showed up at my birthday party, I was so happy, assuming that she had not been drawn into the con-

flict. But as she left she said, "You better settle things with my son." I asked her if she had read the letters. She didn't say, although she warned me that our friendship would end if her husband found out. Since then, I've grieved the loss of her friendship.

In the meantime I have met with this young man in the presence of our pastor. He listed all the issues he had with me. When it was my turn I took the opportunity to say that nothing in the letters was true. I also said that I didn't understand where all the lies had come from and that he owed me an apology. As I talked, he sat there stonewashed and silent.

I don't know what to do next. I feel that he has succeeded in destroying a precious friendship.

Dear Unresolved Conflict:

You chose not to tell us what the issues were or what your pastor recommended. Without that information we have no basis on which to judge this situation. In fact, without the son's side of things we lack the information needed to form an opinion (Prov. 18:17).

It is good, however, that you met face to face. That's a recon-

Peter and Marja



are
JN

ciling effort on your part. Yet we can't help but wonder whether there isn't something that you said which might have been misinterpreted by him. It might be worth your while to see your pastor again, if only to ask whether or not he heard something in your conversation which might explain this young man's anger. Then apologize, even if it was an unintentional or misunderstood slight.

When it comes to conflict, people tend to side with family rather than friends, proving once again that blood is thicker than water. Nevertheless, you should not conclude that your friendship is over. Talk to your friend and honestly ask her to be very specific about the nature of the judgment against you. If there's even a kernel of truth to the charge, deal with it without

becoming defensive or defiant. Unfortunately, you may not be able to resolve this matter. In that case you have no choice but to accept your loss and move on. It is a sad but true fact that most of us carry the hurt of at least one unhealed relationship. No wonder that Christ's primary purpose for coming is his "ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18).

Write to: P & M, 16 Kimbermount Drive, St. Catharines, ON L2N 5V6.

Peter and Marja Slopstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidke, Alan Vandermaas, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

25-year study: divorce has long-term impact on children

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. (EP) — A new long-term study of divorce found that children of divorced parents continue to suffer negative effects from the family break-up into adulthood.

The study, by Dr. Judith S.

Wallerstein and Dr. Julia Lewis, was presented at the Second World Congress of Family Law and the Rights of Children and Youth, held this year in San Francisco June 2-7.

The researchers spent hun-

dreds of hours conducting face-to-face interviews with 130 children and their parents, seen at regular intervals over a 25-year period, beginning with the decisive separation.

Children whose parents divorced when they were young generally had no memories of an intact family, but instead remember their childhoods as times of loneliness in which "no one was there to take care of them." After 25 years, they speak sadly of a lost childhood, describing "their sadness, helpless anger and yearning for someone to take care of them."

Not prepared for adulthood

Family break-up leaves children "less resistant to the gratifications promised by drugs, alcohol and early sex," researchers found; half of the children studied became involved in serious drug and alcohol abuse as adolescents, often without any indication that their parents noticed or cared.

Entry into adulthood for the children of divorced parents is

often "a task for which they were poorly prepared and for which they had little help," researchers found.

Lack of financial support from parents often forced the young people in the study to skip college or to settle for less demanding schools and professions to accommodate their need for a job.

"Options available to them and their life-time career choices were disappointing," the researchers reported. Over half of those studied failed to attain the level of education of their parents, and nearly half fell below or well below the socio-economic levels of their parents.

While parents who divorce may try to build strong relationships with their children, those relationships will be less vital than those resulting from intact families, researchers found. But in many families the absent fathers made little or no effort to keep in touch with their children, and children of such fathers grew up with no respect for a father figure. Only a few of the children said they would

seek their father's advice on any personal or family issue.

Children of divorced parents remain apprehensive about marriage and establishing their own families as they grow to adulthood. Many suffered from a fear of intimacy. "Men and women alike suffered with the fear that they would be abandoned and betrayed by their lover or spouse," the researchers found. This was even where the parental split had been amicable.

The researchers noted that public policy on divorce has been driven by the adult experience, and call into question the widely held notion that once divorce-related issues are settled between parents, "the parents will resume their parenting and the child will resume her normal developmental progress." Instead, the agony associated with being a child of divorced parents increases over time.

Plans to address the long-term emotional and financial needs of the children of divorced parents "are urgently needed to ease the plight of these children," they conclude.

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Comment

Are sermons indispensable — or just bad sermons?

Dear Mary:

You and I have listened to thousands of sermons by now. They may have been good, bad and indifferent, but one thing is sure: we have not doubted that sermons play a crucial role in the life of the church and its members.

At least not publicly doubted it, until now. The truth is that for a few years I've been doubting the validity of sermons as essential parts of the official ecclesiastical worship experience. I want to give voice to that now. Perhaps I need to be corrected. Then again, perhaps the church needs to face up to a problem here.

I first ask myself: Have sermons consistently built up my own faith? While not denying that some have contributed along the way, my reflections tell me that my faith was built most by faces and voices of specific Christians, times of personal struggles with God in moments of crisis, and ongoing reading of Scriptures. But sermons? Not much.

Is that, I ask, because of low-quality sermons? It is true that I can remember splendid sermons that touched me deeply. But most sermons I hear are forgettable. Then again, given what it takes to make sermons in the face of weekly pressures on sermon-makers, how can most sermons be anything but mediocre? And so it is unrealistic to defend the traditional place of sermons on the grounds that they ought to be superb.

We CRCs often claim to have superior preaching, but don't ask me to defend the current CRC as an example of spiritually lively and sound church life.

Next, I ask, can one demonstrate that sermons are essential for the church either from Scripture itself or from history? As for Scripture, I doubt that what we understand sermons to be today can be linked directly to what the original apostles did, even if we encounter the word "preach" in our Bibles.

As for history, many major Christian ecclesiastical traditions do not place sermons front-centre the way we do. And the contemporary truth is that all ecclesiastical traditions are in trouble: membership trouble, loyalty trouble, identity trouble, direction trouble. We CRCs often claim to have superior preaching, but don't ask me to defend the current CRC as an example of spiritually lively and sound church life.

Reflections on these items would not have raised doubts about sermons, necessarily. Experiences with faithful church goers has. Off and on for at least the last 10 years I have probed my church peers for their evaluations of sermons. Their answers amount to little more than: "We want good sermons..., solid food." But they can't tell me what that means. Moreover, specific sermons get praised by X and condemned by Y, clearly for reasons that had nothing to do with the sermon words spoken in the manner they were, but for reasons that had everything to do with the listeners.

I've read books on the topic. They tell me what a good sermon is like. One even told me what my obligations as a listener are. But I've found no books or articles that assessed what impact on hearers sermons actually have. And as you know, I'm an occasional preacher myself. These days as I stand on the pulpit doing my thing, I do not really know what the dynamics are. I intend my words to lay bare Scripture and illuminate contemporary life, but do they? And if not, is that because I miss the mark as preacher? Or is there far more to it?

You know when baring Scripture illuminates my life these days? Being part of a small group of Christians reading Scripture together and sharing responses to it. I wonder if that is not the direction churches should take. Small groups around Scripture, asking, doubting, sharing, reading, listening, praying, wondering, trusting. Instead of one person "up there" and all of us "down below." Sermons don't do it for me anymore, in either location.

*With warmest greetings,
Adrian*



Dear Adrian,

Wouldn't it be interesting to conduct a poll of people who have listened to thousands of sermons, asking them to respond to your letter? Maybe the poll should include those pastors who have preached thousands of sermons.

In my years of church going I have encountered all kinds of preaching. Early in our marriage Bob and I lived in a city where there were no Christian Reformed churches. We basically alternated between a church whose pastor had a PhD in English and preached works of art without much gospel, and a church where the preaching was only so-called simple gospel. Neither was very satisfying. Many of our friends there, incidentally, looked up to the CRC as having great preaching. We have also lived through the desert of preaching in the CRC. Before we moved to Canada I used my organ-playing ability for awhile to escape the preaching in the church in which we were members.

I must say, though, that I am not as negative about sermons as you seem to be. I do recall sermons through which God spoke to me at particular times in my life. During my last years of counselling there was a period of time when I was under spiritual attack. That's not putting it too strongly. One important factor in maintaining my faith was the preaching of the pastor we had at that time who had an uncanny ability to recognize the deepest evil in the world and yet leave me with profound hope. I still feel a lot of gratitude for those sermons.

But as you point out the issue is deeper than good or bad sermons. You're talking about the place of the sermon in our experience of worship. I tend to agree with you that we have put too much emphasis on the sermon. Since the Reformation we have put such an emphasis on words, on verbal communication of the gospel by a person who has been trained to do that. I know there are historical reasons for that, and mind you, I am all for educated clergy. But we've developed passive listeners and we've lost something on the way.

How to rectify the situation? Not simply by making the sermon shorter or less central. I think we need to elevate the Lord's Supper to the place it held in the New Testament. That means celebrating it much more often, and then really celebrating it instead of tacking it on to the end of an already long service. But that's one of my soap-boxes and perhaps another column.

My experience with small groups is not nearly as positive as yours. Small groups I've been part of have been warm and pleasant but have not challenged me or strengthened me in the way you describe.

But there we are. The care and feeding of God's people is quite a challenge!

*Cordially,
Mary*

Classifieds

Classified Rates	Births	Anniversaries	Anniversaries	Anniversaries
(Revised February 1, 1995) <p>Births \$25.00 Marriages & Engagements \$40.00 Anniversaries \$45.00 2-column anniversaries \$90.00 Obituaries \$45.00 Notes of thanks \$35.00 Birthdays \$40.00 All other one-column classified advertisements: \$15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is \$15.00. Letter under file number \$35.00 extra. Photos: \$25.00 additional charge. Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive ATTENTION! a) <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format. b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is not acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion. c) Photographs sent by fax are not acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original. d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements. e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).</p> <p>NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address.</p> <p><i>Christian Courier</i> 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313</p>	<p>SLUYS: <i>It's a boy!</i> Rob and Patricia Sluys (nee DeVries) of Thanesville, Ont., are very pleased to announce that</p> <p>ALEX JEFFREY safely arrived on July 11, 1997, at 5:48 p.m., in Chatham, Ont. He weighed 7 lbs., 3/4 oz. and measured 19 1/4". Alex is the first grandchild for Charlie and Jennie DeVries of Dresden, Ont., and Bill and Jill Sluys of Blenheim, Ont. "The Lord looks down from heaven. He sees every person. He made their heart..." (Ps.33:13,15 ICB).</p>	<p>1947 September 10 1997 We are very happy to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>ADRIANUS MARKUS and STYNTJE MARKUS (nee DE RUITER)</p> <p>on Sept. 11, 1997, D.V. Congratulations and may the Lord continue to bless you. We all love you very much.</p> <p>Maria & Jeff Myers Scott, Andrea Jacobus & Vanessa Markus Emily, Jennifer Peter Markus & Anna Illes Marianne & Frank Bouwhuis Julianne, Rebecca Leona & Gary Brouwer Tara, Jeffrey, Tim Joanne & Jeff Cummings Elizabeth, Mark, Charles "The Lord watches over those who have reverence for him" (Ps. 33:18a). Home address: R.R. #4, Bradford, ON L3Z 2A6</p>	<p>1947 September 10 1997 With praise and thanksgiving to God who has kept them in His care, we joyfully announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>DIRK and JETSKE PAUL</p> <p>Trevor & Janneke Raymond Corin, Douglas Simon & Marieke Paul Bert & Jenny Dekkema Adrienne, Annelies, Aidan, Meredith Rev. Robert & Adri Denhoed Jessica, Nathan, Ben, Hanna, Marielle, Emma Ron & Dorothy Vandenburg Eric, Josie, Natalie, Simon Ted & Anita Paul Simon, Marieke, Sarah Rev. Kevin & Anne Marie Smith Paul & Rita Haddock We wish to invite family and friends to an open house to be held on Saturday, Sept. 13, 1997, from 1:30 - 5:30 p.m., at 290 Main Street, Unionville, Ont. (905) 477-3482. Best wishes only. Home address: 446 Cummer Avenue, Willowdale, ON M2M 2G2</p>	<p>1957 September 6 1997 "Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways! You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you" (Ps.128:1,2). With thankfulness to God in our hearts we, the children and grandchildren, joyfully announce the 40th wedding anniversary of</p> <p>MARTIN and ANNA VAN DER HEIDEN (nee TER STEEDE)</p> <p>We thank you Mom and Dad, Oma and Opa, for all the love and support you have given to us over the years. It is our prayer that the Lord will continue to bless and guide you. May you continue to discover each day anew the wonderful gift the Lord has given you in each other.</p> <p>Ron & Susan van der Heiden — Caledonia, Ont. Jonathan, Amanda, Aaron Sylvia & Harold Vander Sluis — Pembroke, Ont. Annamarie, Laura, Rachel Elizabeth & Mark Ruby — Waterloo, Ont. Benjamin, Sean</p> <p>A family gathering will be held in their honor.</p> <p>Address: 305 Bold St., Hamilton, ON L8P 1W3. Phone: (905) 522-1422.</p>
	<p>Anniversaries</p> <p>1947 September 11 1997 "The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness" (Lam.3:22,23). With praise and thanksgiving to God, we joyfully announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>GERRIT and ANDREA BARTEN (nee VIJN)</p> <p>May the Lord continue to bless you richly as you continue to be a blessing to us. With love from your children and grandchildren, Dick & Betsy Braam — Georgetown, Ont.</p> <p>Jason & Retisny, Sarah, Ryan Tony & Ann Bouma — Calgary, Alta. Peter, Brian, Diana, Jaclyn, Monique Klare & Maria Barten — Guelph, Ont. Michelle & Bill, Jeff, Karen, David, Julie Jacqueline Barten — Norval, Ont. Home address: 14 Stavely Crescent, Brampton, ON L6W 2R9</p>	<p>1937 September 23 1997 With thankfulness and joy to our heavenly Father, we wish to announce the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents</p> <p>JAN and JACOBIA MEINEMA (nee KROTTJE)</p> <p>May the Lord continue to bless you Mom and Dad. With love from your children: Elmer & Linda — Listowel, Ont. Clarence & Teena — Rimbey, Alta. Greta & Tim McMullen — Waterloo, Ont. John — Listowel, Ont. Jake & Anne — Warman, Sask. Nell & Fred — Cornwall, Ont. Henry & Val — Red Deer, Alta. Peter & Jeannette — Warman, Sask. Bob & Debbie — New Hamburg, Ont. Ron & Janet — Innisfail, Alta. Paul & Myra — Saskatoon, Sask. Connie — Listowel, Ont. Also surrounded with the love of many grand- and great-grandchildren. We wish to invite family and friends to celebrate with us to an open house on Saturday, Sept. 27, 1997, from 2:30 till 4:30 p.m., at Bethel Chr. Ref. Church, Listowel, Ont. Best wishes only please. Home address: J. Meinema, 460 Richelieu Ave. S., Listowel, ON N4W 1Z1</p>	<p>1957 September 7 1997 Brampton Norval With praise and thanksgiving to God, we joyfully celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>SAM and WINNIE TILSTRA (nee HOONYENGA)</p> <p>Jack & Diana Vos — Arthur, Ont. Charlene, George, Megan, Colin Alan & Debbie Tilstra — Huntsville, Ont. Jeremiah, Micheal, Adam, Kaylea, Jordan Frank & Sandra VanderWilp — Brampton, Ont. Kelly, Laura, Sid, Joel, Lucas John & Amy Sikkema — Brampton, Ont. Robyn, Cheri, Doug, Greg, Samantha, Jamie Rob & Debbie Donker — Brampton, Ont. Melanie, Pamela, Candice Mike & Jackie Albert — Brampton, Ont. Tyler, Zachery Open house will be held on Saturday, Sept. 13, 1997, from 2-4 p.m., at the John Knox Chr. School, 82 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, Ont. Everyone welcome. Home address: R.R. #2, Norval, ON L0P 1KO</p>	<p>1957 August 30 1997 With joy and thankfulness to God, we are happy to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>WYNAND and FEMMIE VANDERSCHEE (nee HOEKMAN)</p> <p>Our prayer is that God will bless you with health and happiness in the years to come. Thank you for all that you have done for us. With love from your children and grandchildren: Louise & Tony van Wyngaarden — Brantford, Ont. Anthony, Emily, Natalie, Kathryn Anne & Arnie VanderHeyden — Smithers, B.C. Wyatt Evelyn & Trevor Cole — Brantford, Ont. Rachel, Danielle, Claire, Eric Rhonda & Jeff Leaist — Mississauga, Ont.</p> <p>Friends are invited to celebrate with us at an open house on Saturday, Sept. 6, 1997, from 2-4 p.m., at Brantford Chr. School, 7 Calvin St., Brantford, Ont. Home address: 23 Rowanwood Ave., Brantford, ON N3S 7B7</p>
	<p>Personal</p> <p>Single Christian, never married, 29-year-old male, seeking a Christian female, 26-30 for a long-term relationship. I'm college educated. My interests are snowmobiling, camping, going out with friends, church related activities, and I enjoy country living. I would love to hear from you, preferably from Southwestern Ontario, if you hold similar interests. Please reply to File #2672, c/o <i>Christian Courier</i>, 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1.</p>	<p>Employment Wanted</p> <p>21-year-old female is seeking to work on a dairy farm and/or as a nanny/housekeeper. Has experience in both areas and a childcare diploma. Willing to move. Living conditions needed. Call Wilma at (519) 765-4165 or leave message.</p>	<p>Attention: All churches Please inform us of important changes. Items under "Church News" will be included free of charge.</p>	<p>Take advantage of our Calendar. It's here for you!!</p>
Thank You				
				
BERGSMA: A big thank you to everybody who has helped making my 90th birthday such an enjoyable time. Thanks again. Anna Bergsma St. Catharines, Ont.				

Classifieds

Anniversaries	Obituaries	Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous
<p>1952 September 3 1997 With joy and gratitude, we announce the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents ADRIAN and JOYCE VAN GEEST (nee HANEMAYER) We thank God for his love and faithfulness and pray that He may continue to surround them with His loving presence. Neil & Mary-Jane Van Geest — Grimsby, Ont. Kevin, Ryan, Karen, Duane, Daniel Arlene & Fred Bennink — Ancaster, Ont. Aaron, Kaitlin, Meagan Gord & Anita Van Geest — Grimsby, Ont. Jacob, Ari Joyce & Jim Koomneef — Smithville, Ont. Adrian, Alexandra Shirley & John De Vries — Smithville, Ont. Lindsey, Christine, Rosalie, Johnny Home address: 23 Red Haven Dr., Grimsby, ON L3M 5J7</p>	<p>EDUARD HAAGEN of Second Chr. Ref. Church, Abbotsford, B.C., passed away on Aug. 6, 1997, at the age of 58 years. He is survived by his wife Johanna Haagen of 32 years. Four children: Jack Haagen Leonard Haagen Patricia & Robert Dieleman Robert Haagen and two granddaughters Rebekah and Katelyn. He will be sadly missed by his mother and mother-in-law, brothers, sisters, and extended family. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found..." (Isa.55:6). Correspondence address: Johanna Haagen, #40-3115 Trafalgar St., Abbotsford, BC V2S 8C5</p>	<p>DCA Travel Holland Travel Professional</p> <p>Toronto 416-224-5211 Toll-Free (Canada wide) 1-800-667-2525 Fax 416-224-0842 Grimsby 905-945-3301 Burlington 905-522-8602 Emergency Service Available Business & Vacation Travel</p>	<h2>Congratulations!</h2> <p>We extend our congratulations to the Rev. Hans Uittenbosch (1901 Pilgrims Way, #303, Oakville, ON L6M 2W9, Tel. 1-905-825-1215), who expects to observe the 40th anniversary of his ordination in the ministry of the Christian Reformed Church on Sept. 14, 1997.</p> <p>During eight of those years he pastored two congregations (Renfrew and Kingston, Ont.) and today he continues to serve in the ministry to Seafarers, specializing in the ministry to the multinational officers, staff and crew members on board of cruise ships.</p> <p>A celebration will be held at 9:30 a.m., Sunday, Sept. 14, 1997, in the Covenant Chr. Ref. Church (exit Essa Rd. S. to Ardagh Ave. right), Barrie, Ont.</p> <p><i>The Board of Directors Action International Seafarers Ministry Mr. W. David Luikaart, President</i></p>
<p>Obituaries</p> <p>The Lord took from us, our loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother EGBERTJE (BETTY) VEENSTRA (nee VREDEVELT) on Aug. 4, 1997. Born on July 15, 1916, in Hijken, the Netherlands. Predeceased by her husband Hielke and son Wietze. She is survived by their children: Jean Della & Sid Nona Pat & Roger Henry & Gwen John 16 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Funeral service was held at the chapel of Ward Funeral Home in Brampton, Ont., on Aug. 7, 1997. Interment at Meadowvale Cemetery. Correspondence address: Mr. Henry Veenstra, 227 Elizabeth St. S., Brampton, ON L6Y 1S2</p>	<p>Church News</p> <p>Christian Reformed Church Calls accepted: — to Maranatha, Bowmanville, Ont., Candidate Michael Miedema.</p> <p>New clerk: — Mt. Hamilton, Hamilton, Ont., Mr. Sam Buma, 926 West 5th St., Hamilton, Ont.</p> <p>Classis meeting: — The fall meeting of Classis Eastern Canada will be held, D.V., on October 24 and 25, 1997, in the CRC, Williamsburg, Ont. Send all materials for the printed agenda to the stated clerk before September 9, 1997. James Kooistra, Stated Clerk.</p> <p>Travel</p> <p>GOING TO HOLLAND FOR VACATION? Why not rent a VACATION APARTMENT and visit family and sight-see at your leisure. CENTRALLY LOCATED near APELDOORN. Year-round accommodations. FOR BROCHURE OR MORE INFORMATION CALL Harold or Nellie at (905) 985-7891 or fax us at (905) 985-3007 e-mail: hamel@idirect.com</p>	<p>If you are considering sending us an ad via fax, please be sure to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • send printed or typed copy • include billing address • include contact person with phonenumber. <p>Thank You.</p> <p>Interested in placing an ad? Get in touch with us for details.</p>	<h2>Class A Mechanic Required</h2> <p>For busy used car dealership Guelph, Ontario Send resume to: J. Vyn, R.R. 5, Guelph, ON N1H 6J2</p> <h2>Route Sales Trainee</h2> <p>We require a responsible, self-motivated person to train for wholesale route sales of our excellent line of floral products. Candidates with some knowledge of horticulture preferred. Excellent driving record essential. If you meet these criteria please contact Brian van Staalduin at 1-800-263-6815 to arrange an interview.</p>
<p>Psalm 42 On Aug. 2, 1997, the Lord took unto Himself His child and our friend and brother GERRIT (GARNET) JAN WITTENBERG at the age of 76 years. May the Lord be with his wife Gerda, children and grandchildren. From the seniors' club "Eeventide," Kentville, Nova Scotia.</p>	<p>Take action! Place an ad in our Business Directory.</p>	<p>PARKINSONS THE CAUSE The FACTS</p> <p>(NC)—An area of the brain called substantia nigra contains cells which produce a chemical called dopamine. With the death of these cells, and the resultant deficiency of dopamine, there is an interference in the transmission of messages between the nerve cells which makes initiating movement difficult. Parkinson's is not thought to be inherited. Research studies are in progress to determine possible causes when it affects more than one family member. It is not contagious.</p> <p>For information call: 1-800-565-3000</p>	<p>ADDRESS CHANGE</p> <p>Please use this form and allow four weeks for processing request.</p> <p>Attach your present label here.</p> <p>please print</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>New address: _____</p> <p>City: _____ Prov.: _____ Code: _____</p> <p>Mail to: CHRISTIAN COURIER 4-261 Martindale Road St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</p> <p>New address is in effect _____</p> <p>(Date) _____</p>

Classifieds

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous

Job Opportunities

Job Opportunities

Events

ANNOUNCEMENT

The members of Vernon Christian Reformed Church, located in the Okanagan Valley of British Columbia, are seeking a PASTOR with strong leadership abilities to help our congregation of 230 members implement our new vision statement. We are a friendly and supportive congregation, eager to see growth in small group ministries, outreach, worship and prayer. Our vision statement, core values and church profile are available upon request. Please send your inquiry or profile to:

Wayne Samland — Search Committee, Vernon Chr. Ref. Church, 3605 12th Street, Vernon, BC V1T 3S7 or fax (250) 545-3924.

You are invited!

The council and congregation of Waterloo Christian Reformed Church invite you to join them for the installation of Rev. Michael Winnowski as their senior pastor on Friday, Sept. 5, 1997, at 8 p.m. at Waterloo Chr. Ref. Church, 209 Bearinger Rd., Waterloo, Ont.

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ORDERS NOW BEING ACCEPTED FOR FALL '97 DELIVERY

Positions Available

We are a growing Hi-Tech Company with national and global expansion plan, now seeking individuals for the following positions.

Business Development Manager (Job #1): This is a high profile position responsible for co-ordinating and performing all administrative duties and able to implement business plans within time and budget, including liaison with corporate customers and government authorities. The candidate will be a highly organized individual with relevant education (MBA, CMA, etc.) Experience in senior management role in an adult learning environment would be a definite asset.

Secretary/Receptionist (Job #2): This is an important position responsible for all administrative assistant duties including reception duties. The candidate must have experience in working closely with senior management in an infrastructure of a company with minimum 50M in annual revenue.

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Programmer/Analyst - Trainer (AS/400 RPG)

(Job #5): Candidate must be able to develop programs and train (junior/trainee) programmers.

Placement Officer (Job #6): Candidate should have experience in recruiting hi-tech professionals for various companies. Human Resources background would be a definite asset.

We offer an attractive salary and benefit plan commensurate with experience.

Interested candidates please forward your resume in confidence to:



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Mississauga, ON L5N 5R3
Tel.: (905) 858-2854
Fax: (905) 858-2164



Events

CHECK IT OUT!

Attention: University and College Students studying in London, Ont., at the University of Western Ontario, Fanshawe Community College or other college.

STUDENT WELCOME WORSHIP SERVICE with BAND — COFFEE HOUSE following. At First Chr. Ref. Church, 513 Talbot St., London, Ont., at 6 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 7, 1997.

Although "Social Experience" Cornerstone Student Fellowship's first weekly event. Meet students and find out about retreats, service opportunities, discipleship study and special events, 7 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 10, 1997, at the Ministry House, 511 Coombs (walk from UWO).

Call Julie at (519) 453-0044 or Mike 438-1242 also to find out about the "Mass BBQ" on Wednesday, Sept. 3, 1997, at 5 p.m., or for more information.

CRC Campus Ministries
at the
University of Toronto

welcomes students to a weekly "Cost Supper" beginning Thursday, Sept. 11, 1997 at 5:30 p.m. in the office of Dr. Brian Walsh Wycliffe College 5 Hoskin Ave. (just behind Hart House)

Other activities:
Graduate Christian Fellowship
Bible Studies
Study Groups
Faculty Fellowship

For more information call:
(416) 596-2439

Thyroid
Disease
Awareness

(NC) — There's a new recently released self-exam for checking for signs of thyroid disease.

Since most thyroid problems can be cured with early diagnosis and treatment, the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists recommends people regularly look for bulges on their neck by doing the following four steps:

- Using a hand mirror, focus on the area of your neck just below the Adam's apple and immediately above the collarbone.
- Focus on the mirror and tip your head back.
- Take a drink of water and swallow.
- As you swallow, look at your neck. Check for any protrusions when you swallow but be careful not to confuse the Adam's apple with the thyroid gland. The thyroid gland is further down your neck.

If you do see any bulges, see your physician. You may have an enlarged thyroid gland or a thyroid nodule and it should be checked by your doctor.

Classifieds

Events	Events	Miscellaneous
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**HURON CAMPUS MINISTRY OF WATERLOO
Classis Huron****The Church in the Woods**

Waterloo Christian Reformed Church warmly invites all Waterloo area students, their parents and friends, to a

**STUDENT WELCOME SERVICE
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 1997, at 10:30 A.M.**

After the service, information about Huron Campus Ministry, Grace Chr. Fellowship at the University of Waterloo and the Wilfrid Laurier Group will be presented and an excellent luncheon provided.

Please contact **Chaplain Graham E. Morbey** at (519) 886-1474 or (519) 884-1970, ext. 2739 for further information and assistance.

The Waterloo Christian Reformed Church is located at 209 Bearinger Road, Waterloo, Ont.

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CANADA

1-800-267-5232

NC

Teake van der Meer

A well-known Frisian entertainer is coming back for a 2-week tour in Ontario.

He will be accompanied by: Gerzinus Hoekstra.

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 1997:

In **Jarvis**, Ont., at 7:30 p.m., in the Community Hall. For tickets call Bev. Slofstra (519) 587-2162

Friday, Sept. 19, 1997:

In **Strathroy**, Ont., at 7:30 p.m., in the Strathroy Community Chr. School (Hwy. 81)

For tickets call Dick De Boer (519) 245-2319

Saturday, Sept. 20, 1997:

In **Bowmanville**, Ont., at 7:30 p.m., in Durham Chr. High School, Scugog Rd. For tickets call Jan Oegema (905) 623-2318

Saturday, Sept. 23, 1997:

in **Wellandport**, Ont., at 7:30 p.m., at the Wellandport Chr. School

Tickets: Bev. Slofstra (519) 587-2162

Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

Sept. 5 Installation of Rev. Michael Winnowski as senior pastor of Waterloo Chr. Ref. Church, 8 p.m., Waterloo CRC, 209 Bearinger Rd., **Waterloo**, Ont. (#)

Sept. 13 Concert at 7:30 p.m., at Benton St. Baptist Church, **Kitchener**, Ont. (organ, violin and piano) featuring O. Ariss, R. Braun, C. Marsh and J. Oldengarm.

Sept. 16 Noon hour organ recital by Jonathan Oldengarm, St. James Cathedral, **Toronto**, Ont.

Sept. 17-23 Well-known Frisian entertainer Teake van der Meer is back! Ontario tour starts: **Sept. 17**: 7:30 p.m., Community Hall, Jarvis, Ont.; **Sept. 19**: 7:30 p.m., Comm. Chr. School, **Strathroy**, Ont.; **Sept. 20**: 7:30 p.m., **Durham**, **Bowmanville**, Ont.; and **Sept. 23**: 7:30 p.m., Chr. School, **Wellandport**, Ont. Info./tickets: Bev. Slofstra (519) 587-2162 (#)

Sept. 20 Lynelle Pierce in concert with Sarnia Friendship Group, Second CRC, **Sarnia**, Ont. Watch for local announcements.

Sept. 26 Organ recital by Canadian award-winning organist, Thomas Annand, at Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont. Info./tickets: (905) 648-2131.

Sept. 27 Stephen Series Caring Ministry Workshop at Covenant CRC, **St. Catharines**, Ont., from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. led by Carolyn Horton from St. Petersburg, Fl. For registration/info, please call Pauline Drenth at (905) 935-9802.

Sept. 28 Dutch worship service led by Rev. J. Hoytema, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

Oct. 8 Noon hour organ recital by Jonathan Oldengarm, Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, **Toronto**, Ont.

Oct. 9 Noon hour organ recital by Jonathan Oldengarm, St. Paul's Anglican Church (Bloor & Jarvis), **Toronto**, Ont.

Oct. 16 Canadian poet and novelist Joy Kogawa will be at Redeemer College for book signings and a public reading at 8 p.m., RC, **Ancaster**, Ont. Free admission.

Oct. 18 The Netherlands Bazaar, 10 a.m.-10 p.m., Thornhill Community Centre (Bayview Ave. & John St.), **Thornhill**, Ont. Info.: (905) 477-1243 (#)

Oct. 18 Concert by the WLU Symphony, featuring organist Jonathan Oldengarm, 7:30 p.m., Benton St. Baptist Church, **Kitchener**, Ont.

Oct. 25 Community concert by organist Jonathan Oldengarm, 7:30 p.m., Benton St. Baptist Church, **Kitchener**, Ont.

Nov. 7 Christian Festival Concert by the 100-voice choir and concert band of the Ont. Chr. Music Assembly, with special guests from Europe, under the direction of Leendert Kooij. At 8 p.m., Roy Thomson Hall, **Toronto**, Ont. For tickets/info, call (416) 636-9779 (#).

**The Guelph Christian Reformed Churches and
Immanuel Christian Fellowship**

invite

University and College students with their families for worship and fellowship

September 7, 1997, at

10:30 — New Life Christian Reformed, 400 Victoria N.
10:00 — First Guelph Chr. Ref., 287 Water St.

All students, their parents and friends are invited to a barbecue at 12 noon at First Guelph Chr. Ref. Church.

Immanuel Chr. Fellowship (a campus student fellowship) welcomes new and returning students to join us on Wednesday evenings in Room 441 University Centre

5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

For more information contact:

Rev. Ed Den Haan, Campus Minister
(519) 824-4120, ext. 2392

Tanya Kooger: tkooger@uoguelph.ca

Welcome to Guelph. Let's get acquainted!



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News

Ontario man honored for rescuing Jews

Alan Doerksen (with files from *The Toronto Star* and *The St. Catharines Standard*)

NORTH YORK, Ont. — Roelof Vis risked his life many times to save Jews in the Netherlands during the Second World War. In early August, he was honored with the title "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority, at a ceremony in North York, Ont.

Vis received a standing ovation as Jehudi Kinar, the Consul General of Israel, presented him with a medal and certificate of honor. The award is Israel's highest civilian honor.

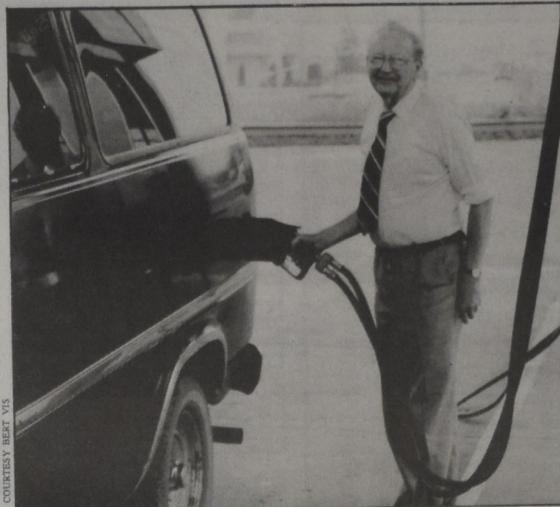
In response, Vis stated, "I would like to point out I am not righteous. Am I a hero? Certainly not ... God was my righteous ness and my strength."

During the war, Vis and his family helped hide hundreds of Jews. In 1944, a Nazi sympathizer informed on him to the Germans, who placed a \$10,000 bounty on his head.

"He thought that he'd get caught and shot and he was very surprised that he made it to the end of the war," says Vis's wife, Femmy.

Vis's daughter, Mieke, credited her father's deeds to his faith. "We're Christians and the Lord says you have to love your neighbor. He had a love of his neighbor and that's why he did this."

Roelof and Femmy Vis came to Canada in 1981 and live in Smithville, Ont., where they attend a Canadian Reformed Church.



COURTESY REET VIS

Roelof Vis

Wife who wouldn't clean wins case

TOKYO (Reuters) — A Japanese court has ruled in favor of a 33-year-old woman who divorced her husband after he demanded that she do all the cooking, cleaning and laundry even though she held a full-time job.

The woman's husband, a 35-year-old public servant, filed a lawsuit demanding his wife pay \$52,600 in damages for refusing to live with him soon after their marriage and ultimately divorcing him. The Tokyo District Court turned down the husband's demand for damages but ordered the wife to return an \$11,600 betrothal gift and her wedding ring.

"There was a reason for the wife to take passive action against the marriage," Judge Hiroto Waki said.

'Back To School' would be a dream come true for Mylene

Mylene, 8, lives in the village of Masin, Quezon, Philippines. She knows that her days of formal education are limited by her family's finances. CRWRC is working with her family to improve their income. And THAT gives her hope. Hope for a higher education.



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Asatou and Yentema Tankoano from West Africa